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LIFE

OF

EDWIN FORREST,

THE AMERICAN TRAGEDIAN.

BY

WILLIAM ROUNSEVILLE ALGER.

"All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players."

VOLUME I.

PHILADELPHIA:
J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO.
1877.

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TO

JAMES OAKES,

THE

TRUE PYTHIAS

IN THE REAL LIFE OF THIS

DAMON,

THE FOLLOWING BIOGRAPHY

IS INSCRIBED.

PREFATORY NOTE.

THE AUTHOR of the following work apologizes for the delay of its publication on the ground of long-continued ill health which unfitted him for mental labor. He has tried to make amends by sparing no pains in his effort to do justice to the subjects treated. The plan of the ensuing biography is that of a philosophical history, which adds to the simple narrative of events a discussion of the causes and teachings of the events. The writer has interspersed the mere recital of personal facts and incidents with studies of the principal topics of a more general nature intimately associated with these, and has sought to enforce the lessons they yield. His aim in this has been to add to the descriptive interest of the work more important moral values. The thoughtful reader, who seeks improvement and is interested in the fortunes of his kind, will, it is believed, find these episodes attractive; and the frivolous reader, who seeks amusement alone, need not complain of disquisitions which he can easily skip.

The author foresees that some opinions advanced will be met with prejudice and disfavor, perhaps with angry abuse. But as he has written in disinterested loyalty to truth and humanity, attacking no entrenched notion and advocating no revolutionary one except from a sense of duty and in the hope of doing a service, he will calmly accept whatever odium the firm statement of his honest convictions may bring. Society in the present phase of civilization is full of tyrannical errors and wrongs against which most persons are afraid even so much as to whisper. To remove these obstructive evils, and exert

an influence to hasten the period of universal justice and good will for which the world sighs, men of a free and enlightened spirit must fearlessly express their thoughts and breathe their philanthropic desires into the atmosphere. If their motives are pure and their views correct, however much a prejudiced public opinion may be offended and stung to assail them, after a little while their valor will be applauded and their names shine out untarnished by the passing breath of obloquy. It is, Goethe said, with true opinions courageously uttered as with pawns first advanced on the chess-board: they may be beaten, but they have inaugurated a game which must be won.

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LIFE OF EDWIN FORREST.

CHAPTER I.

PRELUDE.

EDWIN FORREST has good claims for a biography. The world, it has been said, is annually inundated with an intolerable flood of lives of nobodies. So much the stronger motive, then, for presenting the life of one who was an emphatic somebody. There is no more wholesome or more fascinating exercise for our faculties than in a wise and liberal spirit to contemplate the career of a gifted and conspicuous person who has lived largely and deeply and shown bold and exalted qualities. To analyze his experience, study the pictures of his deeds, and estimate his character by a free and universal standard, is one of the fittest and finest tasks to which we can be summoned. To do this with assimilating sympathy and impartial temper, stooping to no meaner considerations than the good and evil, the baseness and grandeur of man as man, requires a degree of freedom from narrow distastes, class and local biases, but rarely attained. Every effort pointing in this direction, every biographic essay characterized by a full human tone or true catholicity, promises to be of service, and thus carries its own justification. The habit of esteeming and censuring men in this generous human fashion, uninfluenced by any sectarian or partisan motive, unswayed by any clique or caste, is one of the ripest results of intellectual and moral culture. It implies that fusion of wisdom and charity which alone issues in a grand justice. One of the commonest evils among men is an undue sympathy for the styles of character and modes of life most familiar to them or like their own, with an undue antipathy for those unfamiliar to them or unlike their own. It is a duty and a privilege to outgrow this low and poor limitation by cultivating a more liberal range of appreciation.

There is still lingering in many minds, especially in the so-called religious world, a strong prejudice against the dramatic profession. Analyzed down to its origin, the long warfare of church and theatre, the instinctive aversion of priest and player, will be found to be rooted in the essential opposition of their respective ideals of life. The ecclesiastical ideal is ascetic, its method painful obedience and prayer, its chief virtues self-restraint and denial; the dramatic ideal is free, its method self-development and culture, its ruling aims gratification and fulfilment. The votaries of these distinctive sets of convictions and sentiments have from an early age formed two hostile camps. Accordingly, when one known as a clergyman was said to be writing the life of an actor, the announcement created surprise and curiosity and elicited censorious comment. The question was often asked, How can this strange conjunction be explained? It is therefore, perhaps, not inappropriate for the author of the present work to state the circumstances and motives which caused him to undertake it. The narrative will be brief, and may, with several advantages, take the place of a formal preface. Conventional prefaces are rarely read; but the writer trusts that the statement he proposes to make will be not only interesting to the reader but likewise helpful, by furnishing him with the proper key and cue to the succeeding chapters. It may serve as a sort of preparatory lighting up of the field to be traversed; a kind of prelusive sketch of the provinces of experience to be surveyed, of the lessons to be taught, and of the credentials of the author in the materials and other conditions secured to him for the completion of his task. This statement is to be taken as an explanation, not as an apology. The only justification needed lies in the belief that the theatrical life may be as pure and noble as the ecclesiastical; that the theatre has as sound a claim to support as the church; that the great actor, properly equipped for his work, is the most flexible and comprehensive style of man in the world, master of all types of human nature and all grades of human experience; and that the priestly profession in our day has as much to learn from the histrionic as it has to teach it.

In the winter of 1867, a man of genius, a friend in common between us, having been struck by paralysis and left without support for his family, I encountered James Oakes engaged in the benevolent business of raising funds for the relief of the

sufferers from this calamity. Propitious conditions were thus supplied for the beginning of our acquaintance in respect and sympathy. There were characteristic cardinal chords in our breasts which vibrated in unison, and, in consequence, a strong liking sprang up between us.

For forty years James Oakes had been the sworn bosom friend of Edwin Forrest. He regarded him with an admiration and love romantic if not idolatrous. He had, as he said, known him as youth, as man, in all hours, all fortunes; had summered him and wintered him, and for nigh half a century held him locked in the core of his heart, which he opened every day to look in on him there. He resembled him in physical development, in bearing, in unconscious tricks of manner, in tastes and habits. Indeed, so marked were the likeness and assimilation, despite many important differences, that scores of times the sturdy merchant was taken for the tragedian, and their photographs were as often identified with each other.

No one could long be in cordial relations with Oakes and not frequently hear him allude to his distinguished friend and relate anecdotes of him. Besides, I had myself recollections of Forrest warmly attracting me to him. He was one of the first actors I had ever seen on the stage; the very first who had ever electrified and spell-bound me. When a boy of ten years I had seen him in the old National Theatre in Boston in the characters of Rolla, Metamora, and Macbeth. The heroic traits and pomp of the parts, the impassioned energy and vividness of his delineations, the bell, drum, and trumpet qualities of his amazing voice, had thrilled me with emotions never afterwards forgotten. I had also, in later years, often seen him in his best casts. Accordingly, when, on occasion of a visit of Forrest to his friend in Boston in the early autumn of 1868, the offer of a personal interview was given me, I accepted it with alacrity.

There were three of us, and we sat together for hours that flew unmarked. It was a charmed occasion. There was no jar or hindrance, and he without restraint unpacked his soul of its treasures of a lifetime. The great range of experience from which he drew pictures and narratives with a skill so dramatic, the rare ease and force of his conversation, the deep vein of sadness obviously left by his trials, the bright humor with which he so

naturally relieved this gloom and vented his heart, the winning confidence and gentleness with which he treated me, no touch or glimpse of anything coarse or imperious perceptible in that genial season,—all drew me to him with unresisted attraction. I seemed to recognize in him the unquestionable signals of an honest and powerful nature, magnanimous, proud, tender, equally intellectual and impassioned, harshly tried by the world yet reaping richly from it, capable of eloquent thoughts and great acts, not less fond and true in friendship than tenacious in enmity, always self-reliant, living from impulses within, and not, like so many persons, on tradition and conventionality.

Such was the beginning of my private acquaintance with Forrest. Between that date and his death I had many meetings and spent considerable time with him. He took me into his confidence, unbosomed himself to me without reserve, recounted the chief incidents of his life, and freely revealed, even as to a father confessor, his inmost opinions, feelings, and secret deeds. The more I learned of the internal facts of his career, and the more thoroughly I mastered his character, constantly reminding one —as his friend Daniel Dougherty suggested—of the character of Guy Darrell in the great novel of Bulwer, the more I saw to respect and love. It is true he had undeniable faults,—defects and excesses which perversely deformed his noble nature,—such as frequent outbreaks of harshness and fierceness, occasional superficial profanity, a vein of unforgiving bitterness, sudden alternations of repulsive stiffness with one and too unrestrained familiarity with another. Still, in his own proper soul, from centre to circumference, undisturbed by collisions, he was grand and sweet. When truly himself, not chafed or crossed, a more interesting man, or a pleasanter, no one need wish to meet.

Oakes had long felt that the life of his friend, so prominent and varied and comprehensive, eminently deserved to be recorded in some full and dignified form. He was seeking for a suitable person to whom to intrust the work. With the assent of Forrest he urged me to assume it. I did not at first accede to the proposal, but took it into consideration, making, meanwhile, a careful study of the subject, and arriving finally at the conclusions which follow.

I found in Edwin Forrest a man who must always live in the

history of the stage as the first great original American actor. This place is secured to him by his nativity, the variety, independence, vigor, and impressiveness of his impersonations, the important parts with which he was so long exclusively identified, the extent and duration of his popularity, and the imposing results of his success. Other distinguished actors who have had a brilliant reputation in this country have been immigrants or visitors here, as Cooke, Cooper, Conway, Kean, Booth; or have been eminent only in some special part, as Marble, Hackett, Setchell, Jefferson; or have enjoyed but a local celebrity, as Burton, Warren, and others. But Forrest, home-born on our soil, intensely national in every nerve, is indissolubly connected with the early history of the American drama by a career of conspicuous eminence, illustrated in a score of the greatest characters, and reaching through fifty years. During this prolonged period his massive physique, his powerful personality, his electrifying energy, his uncompromising honesty and frankness, his wealth, the controversies that raged around him, the unhappy publicity of his domestic misfortune, and other circumstances of various kinds, combined, by means of the newspapers, pamphlets, pictures, statuettes, caricatures, to make him a familiar presence in every part of the country. Therefore, whatever differences there may have been in the critical estimates of the rank of his particular presentments or of his general style of acting, it is impossible to deny him his historic place as the first great representative American actor. He likewise *deserves* this place, as will hereafter be recognized, by his pronounced originality as the founder of a school of acting—the American School—which combined, in a manner without any prominent precedent, the romantic and the classic style, the physical fire and energy of the melodramatic school with the repose and elaborate painting of the artistic school.

It cannot be fairly thought that the great place and fame of Forrest are accidental. Such achievements as he compassed are not adventitious products of luck or caprice, but are the general measure of worth and fitness. Otherwise, why did they not happen as well to others among the hundreds of competitors who contended with him at every step for the same prizes, but were all left behind in the open race? If mere brawniness, strut-

ting, rant, purchased favor, and clap-trap could command such an immense and sustained triumph, why did they not yield it in other cases, since there were not at any time wanting numerous and accomplished professors of these arts? A wide, solid, and permanent reputation, such as crowned the career of Forrest, is obtained only by substantial merit of some kind. The price paid is commensurate with the value received.

The common mass of the community may not be able to judge of the supreme niceties of merit in the different provinces of art, to appreciate the finest qualities and strokes of genius, and award their plaudits and laurels with that exact justice which will stand as the impartial verdict of posterity. In these respects their decisions are often as erroneous as they are careless and fickle; and competent judges, trained in critical knowledge, skilled by long experience to detect the minutest shades of truth and falsehood, beauty and ugliness, desert and blameworthiness, will not hesitate to overrule the passing partialities of the contemporary crowd, and rectify their errors for the record of history. But the multitude are abundantly able—none more so—to respond with admiring interest to the impression of original power, recognize the broad outlines of a sublime and fiery soul, thrill under the general signs of genius, and pay deserved tribute to popular exhibitions of skill. And when this great coveted democratic tribute has been given to a public servant, in an unprecedented degree, for half a century, throughout the whole extent of a nation covering eight millions of square miles and including more than thirty millions of inhabitants, securing him a professional income of from twenty to forty thousand dollars a season, and filling three dozen folio volumes with newspaper and magazine cuttings composed of biographic sketches of him and critical notices of his performances,—to undertake to set aside the overwhelming verdict, as deceived and vulgar, is both idle and presumptuous. To account for a career like that of Edwin Forrest it is necessary to admit that he must have embodied force, intellect, passion, culture, and perseverance in a very uncommon degree. And in perceiving and honoring the general evidences of this the great average of the people are better judges, fairer critics, than any special classes or cliques can be; because the former are free from the finical likes and dislikes, the local whims

and biases, the envy and squeamishness which prejudice the feelings and corrupt the judgments of the latter.

The historic place and power of Forrest are of themselves one good reason why his life should be fully and fairly written while all the data are within reach. For it can hardly be a matter of doubt that the theatre is destined in future ages to have in this country a rank and a space assigned to it in the education and entertainment of the public such as it has not yet known. The interest in types of human nature, in modes of human life, in all the marvels of the inner world of the soul, will increase with that popular leisure and culture which the multiplication of labor-saving machinery promises to carry to an unknown pitch; and as fast as this interest grows, the estimate of the drama will ascend as the best school for the living illustration of the experience of man. It is not improbable that the scholars and critics of America a hundred or two hundred years hence will be looking back and laboring with a zeal we little dream of now to recover the beginnings of our national stage as seen in its first representatives. For then the theatre, in its splendid public examples and in its innumerable domestic reduplications, will be regarded as the unrivalled educational mirror of humanity.

Of no American actor has there yet been written a biography worthy of the name; though scarcely any other sphere of life is so crowded with adventure, with romance, with every kind of affecting incident, and with striking moral lessons. The theatre is a concentrated nation in itself. It is a moving and illuminated epitome of mankind. It is a condensed and living picture of the ideal world within the real world. It has its old man, its old woman, its king and queen, its fop, buffoon, and drudge, its youth, its chambermaid, its child, its fine lady, its hero, its walking gentleman, its villain,—in short, its possible patterns of every style of character and life. On the surface of that little mimic world play in miniature reflection all the jealousies and ambitions, hopes and fears, joys and sorrows, plots and counterplots, of the huge actual world roaring without. A clear portrayal of this from the interior, or even a constant suggestion of it in connection with the history of one of its representatives, must be full of interest and edification.

It is very singular, and lamentable too, that while there are

hundreds of admirable and celebrated biographies of kings, generals, statesmen, artists, inventors, merchants, authors, there is said not to exist a single life of an actor which is a recognized classic, a work combining standard value and popular charm. This is especially strange when we recollect that the genius of the player has an incomparable claim for literary preservation, because the glorious monuments of the deeds of the others remain for the contemplation of posterity, but the achievements of the actor pass away with himself in a fading tradition. Architect, sculptor, painter, poet, composer, legislator, bequeath their works as a posthumous life. The tragedian has no chance of this sort unless the features and accents of the great characters he created are photographed in breathing description on the pages that record his triumphs and make him live forever, who otherwise would soon become a bodiless and inaudible echo.

The highest value and service of histrionic genius consist herein; that the magical power of its performances evokes in the souls of those who throng to gaze on them the noblest thoughts and sentiments in a degree superior to that in which they experience them in ordinary life. They thus feel themselves exalted to a grander pitch than their native one. If the great impersonations of Forrest can in a permanent biography be pictured adequately in the colors of reality, each copy of the book will perpetuate a reflex Forrest to repeat in literature on succeeding generations what he did so effectively in life on his contemporaries; namely, strike the elemental chords of human nature till they vibrate with intense sympathy to sublimer degrees than their own of the great virtues of manly sincerity, heroism, honor, domestic love, friendship, patriotism, and liberty, which he illustrated in his chief parts.

Furthermore, every actor who excelling in his art maintains a high character and bearing, and wins a proud social position and fortune, exerts an effective influence in removing the traditional odium or suspicion from his class, and thus confers a benefit on all who are hereafter to be members of it. His example deserves to be lifted into general notice. In the case of Forrest this consideration received an unprecedented emphasis from the fact of his devoting the vast sum of money amassed in his laborious lifetime to the endowment of a home for aged and dependent

members of his profession, and of a school for the public teaching of the dramatic art.

Besides, he was a man of extraordinary strength and originality of character, an imperious, self-defending personality, living steadfastly at first hand from his own impulses, perceptions, and purposes, not shiftily in faded reflections of the opinions and wishes of other people at the second or third remove. He was a standing refutation of the common prejudice against actors, that simulating so many fictitious traits they gradually cease to have genuine ones of their own, and become mere lay figures ready for every chance dress. If any man ever was true to his own fixed type, Forrest was. The study of such a character is always attractive and strengthening, a valuable tonic for more dependent and aimless natures.

He lived a varied, wide, and profound life. He travelled extensively, mingled with all sorts of people, the noble and the base, the high and the low, observed keenly, reflected much, was exposed to almost every sort of trial, and assimilated into his experience the principal secrets of human nature. The moral substance of the world passed into his soul, and the great lessons of human destiny were epitomized there. He knew the inebriating sweetness of popular applause, and the bitter revulsions consequent on its change into public disfavor and censure. He wore the honors, suffered the penalties, and proved both the solidity and the hollowness of fame on its various levels, from the wild idolatry of ignorant throngs to the admiring friendship of gifted and refined spirits. There are swarms of men of dry and contracted souls, and of a poor, wearisome monotony of conventional habits, with no spiritual saliency or relish, no free appropriation of the treasures of the world, whose lives if written would have about as much dignity and interest as the life of a dorbug or a bat. But when a man's faculties are expansive, and have embraced, in a fresh, impulsive way, a great range of experiences, the story is worth telling, and, if truly told, will not fail to yield matter for profitable meditation.

In addition, Forrest always showed himself a man of sterling integrity, inflexible truth, whose word was as good as his bond, who toiled in the open ways of self-denial and industry to build his name and position. He bribed no one to write him up,

bought no one from writing him down, stooped to no startling eccentricities or tricks to get himself talked about, arranged no conspiracies to push his own claims or hold others back, but by manly resolution, study, and effort paid the fair price for all he won, triumphantly resisting those insidious lures of indolence, dissipation, and improvidence so incident to a theatrical career, and steadily raising himself to the summit of his difficult profession, where he sat in assured mastery for two generations. There was a native grandeur about him which attracted admiring attention wherever he moved.

The life of one who for so long a time and in so great a degree enjoyed the favor of his countrymen may be said to belong to the public. The man who has been watched with such eagerness in the fictitious characters of the stage kindles a desire to see him truly in his own. It is proper that the story should be told for the gratification of the natural curiosity of the people, as well as for the sake of the numerous lessons it must inculcate. The lesson of an adventurous and ascending career surmounting severe hardships and obstacles,—the lesson of a varied, fresh, full, racy, and idiosyncratic experience,—the lesson of an extraordinary knowledge of the world, transmuting into consciousness the moral substance of the sphere of humanity,—the lesson of self-respect and force of character resisting the strongest temptations to fatal indulgence,—the lesson of strong faults and errors, not resisted or concealed, but unhappily yielded to, and the bearing of their unavoidable penalties,—the lesson of resolute devotion to physical training developing a frail and feeble child into a man of herculean frame and endurance,—the lesson of talent and ambition patiently employing the means of artistic mental improvement by independent application to truth and nature,—the lesson of a brilliant fortune and position bravely won and maintained,—these and other lessons, besides all those numerous and highly important ones which the theatrical world and the dramatic art in themselves present for the instruction of mankind, have not often been more effectively taught than they may be from the life of Edwin Forrest.

The subject-matter of the drama, understood in its full dignity, is nothing less than *the science of human nature and the art of commanding its manifestations.* The exemplification of this in the

theatre in our country, it is believed, will hereafter be endowed with a personal instructiveness and a social influence greater than it has ever had anywhere else. For the moral essence and interest of representative playing on the stage ultimately reside in the contrasts between the varieties of reality and ideality in the characters and lives of human beings. All spiritual import centres in the conflict and reconciliation of actuals and ideals. In this point of view the biography of the principal American as yet identified with the histrionic profession assumes a grave importance for Americans. Such a narrative will afford opportunity to show what are the elements of good and bad acting both in earnest and in fiction; to contrast the folly of living to gain applause with the dignity of living to achieve merit; to exhibit the valuable uses of competent criticism, the frequency and ridiculous arrogance of ignorant and prejudiced criticism; to expose the mean and malignant artifices of envy, jealousy, and ignoble rivalry. It will, in a word, give occasion for illustrating the true ideal of life, the harmonious fruition of the full richness of human nature, with instances of approaches to it and of departures from it. To get behind the scenes of the dramatic art is to get behind the scenes of the sources of power, the arts of sway, the workings of vice and virtue, the deepest secrets of the historic world.

In the distinguishing peculiarities of his structure and strain Edwin Forrest was one of those extraordinary men who seem to spring up rarely here and there, as if without ancestors, direct from some original mould of nature, and constitute a breed apart by themselves. Alexander, Cæsar, Demosthenes, Mirabeau, Chatham, Napoleon, draw their volitions from such an unsounded reservoir of power, have such latent resources of intuition, can strike such all-staggering blows, that common men, appalled before their mysteriousness, instinctively revere and obey. In the primeval time such men loomed with the overshadowing port of deities and were worshipped as avatars from a higher world. One of this class of men has, if we may use the figure, a sphere so dense and vast that the lighter and lesser spheres of those around him give way on contact with his firmer and weightier gravitation. Wherever he goes he is treated as a natural king. He carries his royal credentials in the intrinsic rank of his organism. There is in his nervous system, resulting from the free

connection and uninterrupted interplay of all its parts, a centralized unity, a slowly swaying equilibrium, which fills him with the sense of a saturating drench of power. His consciousness seems to float on his surcharged ganglia in an intoxicating dreaminess of balanced force, which, by the transcendent fearlessness and endurance it imparts, lifts him out of the category of common men. The dynamic charge in his nervous centres is so deep and intense that it produces a chronic exaltation above fear into complacency, and raises him towards the eternal ether, among the topmost heads of our race. Each of these men in his turn draws from his admiring votaries the frequent sigh of regret that nature made but one such and then broke the die. This high gift, this unimpartable superiority, is a secret safely veiled from vulgar eyes. Fine spirits recognize its occult signals in the pervasive rhythm of the spinal cord, the steadiness of the eye, the enormous potency of function, the willowy massiveness of bearing, and a certain mystic languor whose sleeping surface can with swift and equal ease emit the soft gleams of love to delight or flash the forked bolts of terror to destroy. This gift, as terrible as charming, varies with the temperament and habits of its possessor. In Coleridge its profuse electricity was steeped in metaphysical poppy and mandragora. In our American Samuel Adams it was gathered in a battery that discharged the most formidable shocks of revolutionary eloquence. In Sargent S. Prentiss, one of the most imperial personalities this continent has known, it stood at a great height, but his body was too much for his brain, and, as in a thousand other melancholy examples of splendid genius ruined, the authentic divinity continually gave way to its maudlin counterfeit. Where the spell of this supernal inspiration has been inbreathed, unless it be accompanied by noble employment and gratified affection, either the mind topples into delirium and imbecility, or the temptation to drunkenness is irresistible. It can know none of the intermediate courses of mediocrity, but must still touch some extreme; and one of the five words, ambition, love, saintliness, madness, or idiocy, covers the secret history and close of genius on the earth.

In his basic build, his informing temperament, the habitual sway of his being, Forrest was a marked specimen of this dominating class of men. The circumstances of his life and the training

of his mind were unfavorable to the full development of his power, in the highest directions; and it never came in him to a refined and free consciousness. Had it done so, as it did in Daniel Webster, he would have been a man entirely great. Webster was scarcely better known by his proper name than by his popular sobriquet of the godlike. He and Forrest were fashioned and equipped on the same scale, and closely resembled each other in many respects. The atlantean majesty of Webster seemed so self-commanded in its immense stability that the spectator imagined it would require a thousand men planting their levers at the distance of a mile to tip him from his poise. When he drew his hand from his bosom and stretched it forth in emphatic gesture, the movement suggested the weight of a ton. It was so with Forrest. The slowness of his action was sometimes wonderfully impressive, suggesting to the consciousness an imaginative apprehension of immense spaces and magnitudes with a corresponding dilation of passion and power. His attitudes and gestures cast angles whose lines appeared, as the imagination followed them, to reach to elemental distances. And it is the perception or the vague feeling of such things as these that magnetizes a spell-bound auditory as they gaze. The organic foundation for this exceptional power is the unification of the nervous system by the exact correlation and open communication of all its scattered batteries. This heightens the force of each point by its sympathetic reinforcement with all points. The focal equilibrium that results is the condition of an immovable self-possession. This is an attainment much more common once than it is in our day of external absorption and frittering anxieties. Its signs, the pathetic and sublime indications of this transfused unity, are visible in the immortal masterpieces of antique art, in the statues of the gods, kings, sages, heroes, and great men of India, Egypt, Greece, and Rome. It is now excessively rare. Most of us are but as collections of fragments pieced together, so full of strictures and contractions that no vibratory impact or undulation can circulate freely in us. But Forrest had this open and poised unity in such a degree that when at ease he swayed on his centre like a mountain on a pivot, and when volition put rigidity into his muscles the centre was solidaire with the periphery. And he was thus differenced from his average fellow-men just as those two or three matchless thorough-

bred stallions who have so startlingly raised the breed of horses in this whole country were differenced from their plebeian brothers in the dray and at the plough.

The truth here indicated is one of surpassing importance. However overlooked by the ignorant multitude, it was blindly felt by them, and it was clearly seen by all who had the key to it, especially by women of rich intuitions. With these Forrest was always an especial favorite. Not only did the magnetizing signs of his power so work upon hundreds of men all over the land that he was imitated by them, his habitudes of bearing and voice copied and transmitted, but they also wrought more deeply still on more sensitive imaginations, producing reactions there to be transmitted thence upon their offspring and perpetuate his traits in future generations. This is one of the historic prerogatives of the potent and brilliant artist, one of the chosen modes by which selective nature or providence improves the strain of our race. No biography can have a stronger claim on public attention than one which promises to throw light on the law for exalting the human organism to its highest perfection,—a secret which belongs to the complete training of a dramatic artist and the fascination with which it invests him in the eyes of sensibility.

Still further, Forrest has a claim for posthumous justice as one who was wronged in important particulars of his life and misjudged in essential elements of his character. Outraged, as he conceived, in the sanctities of his manhood, he bore the obloquy for years with outward silence, but with an inner resentment that rankled to his very soul. Endowed with a tender and expansive heart, cultivated taste, and a scrupulous sense of justice, shrinking sensitively from any stain on his honor, he was in many circles considered a selfish despot addicted to the most unprincipled practices. His enemies, combining with certain sets of critics, incompetent, prejudiced, or unprincipled, caused it to be quite commonly supposed that he was a coarse, low performer, merely capable of splitting the ears of the groundlings; while, in fact, his intellectual vigor, his conversational powers, his literary discernment, and his sensibility to the choicest delicacies of sentiment were as much superior to those of the ordinary run of men as his popular success on the stage was greater than that of the ordinary stock of actors. Betrayed—as he and his intimate

friends believed—in his own home, he was, when at length, after long forbearance, moved to seek legal redress, himself accused, and as he always felt, against law, evidence, and equity, loaded with shameful condemnation and damages. Standing by his early friends with faithful devotion and open purse, he was accused of heartlessly deserting them in their misfortunes. A penniless boy, making his money not by easy speculations which bring a fortune in a day, but by hard personal labor, he gave away over a quarter of a million dollars, and then was stigmatized as an avaricious curmudgeon. Cherishing the keenest pride in his profession and in those who were its honor and ornament,—bestowing greater pecuniary benefactions on it than any other man who ever lived, and meditating a nobler moral service to it than any other mere member of it has conferred since Thespis first set up his cart,—he was accused of valuing his art only as a means of personal enrichment and glorification, and of being a haughty despiser of his theatrical brothers and sisters. As a result of these industrious misrepresentations, there is abroad in a large portion of the community a judgment of him which singularly inverts every fair estimate of his deserts after a complete survey. It seems due to justice that the facts be stated, and his character vindicated, so far as the simple light of the realities of the case will vindicate it.

Two definite illustrations may here fitly serve to show that the foregoing statements are to be regarded not as vague generalities, but as strict and literal truth. One is in relation to the frequent estimate of Forrest as a quarrelsome, fighting man. Against this may be set the simple fact that, with all his gigantic strength, pugilistic skill, and volcanic irritability, from his eighteenth year to his death he never laid violent hand in anger on a human being, except in one instance, and that was when provocation had set him beside himself. The other illustration is concerning his alleged pecuniary meanness. When he was past sixty-five, alone in the world with his fast-swelling fortune, under just the circumstances to give avarice its sharpest edge and energy, he set apart the sum of fifty thousand dollars for an annuity to an old friend, to release him from toil and make his last years happy. Even of those called generous, how many in our day are capable of such a deed in answer to a silent claim of friendship?

One more element or feature in this life, of public interest, of attraction and value for biographic use, is its strictly American character. All the outlines and setting of Forrest's career, the quality and smack of his sentiments, the mould and course of his thoughts, the style of his art, were distinctly American. His immediate descent, on both sides, from European immigrants suggests the lesson of the mixture in our nationality, the providential place and purpose of the great world-gathering of nationalities and races in our republic. His personal prejudice against foreigners, with his personal indebtedness to the teachings and examples of foreigners,—Pilmore, Wilson, Cooper, Conway, Kean, —brings up the question of the just feelings which ought to subsist between our native-born and our naturalized citizens; that true spirit of human catholicity which should blend them all in a patriotism identical at last with universal philanthropy and scorning to harbor any schismatic dislikes. And then his intimate relations, at critical periods of his life, with the most marked specimens of our Western and Southern civilization, bring upon the biographic scene many illustrations of those unique American characters, having scarcely prototypes or antitypes, which have passed away forever with the state of society that produced them.

His experience arched from 1806 to 1872, a period perhaps more momentous in its events, discoveries, inventions, and prophetic preparations than any other of the same length since history began. He saw his country expand from seventeen States to thirty-seven, and from a population of six millions to one of forty millions, with its flag floating in every wind under heaven. Washington, indeed, and Franklin, were dead when the life of Forrest began; but Jefferson, Adams, Madison, Marshall, and a throng of the Revolutionary worthies were still on the stage. When he died, every one of the second great cluster of illustrious Americans, grouped in the national memory, with Clay, Calhoun, Webster, Irving, Cooper, and Channing in the centre, was gone; and even the third brilliant company, Emerson, Hawthorne, Bryant, Bancroft, and their peers, was already broken and faltering under the blows of death and decay. During this time his heart-strings stretched out to embrace, the vascular web of his proud sympathies was woven over, every successive State and

Territory added to our domain, till, in his later age, his enraptured eyes drank in the wondrous loveliness of the landscapes of California. By his constant travels and sojourns in all parts of the land, by his acquaintance with innumerable persons representing all classes and sections, by the various relationships of his profession with literature, the press, and the general public, there are suggestive associations, for more than fifty years, between his person, his spirit, his fortunes, and everything that is most peculiar and important in the historic growth and moral changes and destiny of his country.

The composition of a narrative doing justice to a life with such contents and such relations may well be thought worth the while of any one. And if it be properly composed, if the programme here laid down be adequately filled up, the result cannot fail to offer instructions worthy the attention of the American people.

For the reasons now explained, the most intimate friends of Forrest had often tried to induce him to write his own memoir. They knew that such a work would possess extreme interest and value, and they felt that he had every qualification to do it better than it could be done by anybody else. But their efforts were vain. Pride in him was greater than vanity. He had as much self-respect as he had self-complacency. He was, therefore, not ruled by those motives which caused Cicero, Augustine, Petrarch, Rousseau, Gibbon, and a throng of lesser men, to take delight in painting their own portraits, describing their own experiences, toning up the details with elaborate touches. To the reiterated arguments urged by his friends, he replied, "I have all my life been surrounded, as it were, by mirrors reflecting me to myself at every turn; subjected to those praises and censures which keep consciousness in a fever; accompanied at every step by a constant clapping of hands and stamping of feet and pointing of fingers, with the shout or the whisper, 'There goes Forrest!' I have for years been sick of this fixing of attention on myself. I can enjoy sitting down alone and recalling the scenes and occurrences of the past, regarding them as objects and events outside. But to call them up distinctly as parts of myself, and record them as a connected whole, with constant references to the standards in my own mind and the prejudices in the minds of my friends and my enemies,—I cannot do it. The pain of the reminiscences, the

distress of the fixed self-contemplation, would be too much. It would drive me mad. Give over. No persuasion on earth can induce me to think of it."

Every attempt to secure an autobiography having failed, the author of the present work was led, under the circumstances before stated, and with the promise that every facility should be afforded him, to assume the task. In the first conversation held with him on the undertaking, Forrest said, "Tell the truth frankly. Let there be no whitewashing. Show me just as I have been and am." As he thus spoke, he took down from a shelf of his library the first volume of the "Memoirs of Bannister the Comedian," by John Adolphus, and read, in rich sweet tones mellowed by the echoes of his heart, the opening paragraph, which is as follows: "A friendship of many years' duration, terminated only by his death, impels me to lay before the public a memoir of the life of the late John Bannister. In executing this task I am exempted from the difficulties that so frequently beset the author of a friendly biographical essay: I have no vices to conceal, no faults to palliate, no contradictions to reconcile, no ambiguities of conduct to explain. I purpose to narrate the life of a man whose characteristic integrity and buoyant benevolence were always apparent in his simulated characters, and who in real life proved that those exhibitions were not assumed for the mere purposes of his profession, but that his great success in his difficult career arose in no small degree from that truth and sincerity which diffused their influence over the personages he represented." As the admiring cadence of his voice died sadly away, he laid down the volume and said to his auditor, "For your sake, in the work on which you have entered, I wish it were with me as it was with Bannister. But it is otherwise. My faults are many, and I deserve much blame. Yet, after every confession and every regret, I feel before God that I have been a man more sinned against than sinning; and, if the whole truth be told, I am perfectly willing to bear all the censure, all the condemnation, that justly belongs to me. Therefore use no disguising varnish, but let the facts stand forth."

Such were the words of Forrest himself; and in their spirit the author will proceed, sparing no pains to learn the truth, neither holding back or trimming down foibles and vices nor magnify-

ing virtues, recording his own honest convictions without fear or favor, hoping to produce as the result a book which shall do justice to its subject, and contain enough substantial worth and interest to repay the attention its readers may bestow on it. The work will be written more from the stage point of view than from the pulpit point of view, but most of all from that popularized academic or philosophic point of view which surveys the whole field of human life in a spirit at once of scientific appreciation, poetic sympathy, and impartial criticism.

It is to be understood that the acts or traits herein described which reflect particular credit on Edwin Forrest have not been paraded or proclaimed by himself, but have either been drawn from him by questioning or been discovered through inquiries set on foot and documents brought to light by friends who loved and honored him, knew how grossly he had been belied, and were determined that his true record should be set before the public. The writer hopes his readers will not here take a prejudice, imagining that they spy that frequent weakness of biographers, a tendency to undue laudation. All that he asks is that a candid examination be given to the evidence he adduces, and then that a corresponding decision be rendered. While he tries to do justice to the good side of his subject, he will be equally frank in exposing the ill side and pointing its morals.

The sources of information and authority made use of are as follows: First, conversations and correspondence, for five years, with Forrest himself; second, conversations and correspondence with his chief friends and intimates; third, half a dozen biographical sketches of considerable length, several of them in print, the others in manuscript; fourth, magazine articles and newspaper notices and criticisms, extending through his entire career, and reaching to the number of some twenty thousand; fifth, the mass of letters and papers left by him at his death, and made available for my purpose by the kindness of his executors. I must also make grateful acknowledgment, in particular, of valuable suggestions and aid from Gabriel Harrison and T. H. Morrell, two enthusiastic admirers of the player, whose loving zeal for him did not end with his exit.

CHAPTER II.

PARENTAGE AND FAMILY.

EDWIN FORREST made his first appearance on the stage of this world the ninth day of March, 1806, in the city of Philadelphia. His father, William Forrest, was a Scotchman, who had migrated to America and established himself in business as an importer of Scottish fabrics. He was of good descent. *His* father, the grandparent of the subject of this biography, is described as a large, powerfully-built man, residing, in a highly respectable condition, at Cooniston, Mid-Lothian, Edinburgh County, Scotland. In the margin is a copy of the family coat of arms. It was discovered and presented to Mr. Forrest by his friend William D. Gallagher. The motto, "Their life and their green strength are coeval," or, as it may be turned, "They live no longer than they bear verdure," happily characterizes a race whose hardy constitutions show their force in vigorous deeds to the very end. He who, in America, plumes himself on mere titular nobility of descent, may be a snob; but the science of genealogy, the tracing of historic lineages and transmitted family characteristics, deals with one of the keenest interests of the human heart,

one of the profoundest elements in the destiny of man. And the increasing attention given to the subject in our country is a good sign, and not the trifling vanity which some superficial critics deem it. It deals with those complicated facts of crossing or mingling streams of blood and lines of nerve out of which—and it is a point of immeasurable importance—the law of hereditary communication of qualities and quantities, influences and destinies, is to be formulated.

William Forrest, after a long struggle against pecuniary embarrassments, gave up his mercantile business, and obtained a situation in the old United States Bank. On the closing of that institution, in connection with which his merits had secured him the friendly acquaintance of the celebrated millionaire Stephen Girard, he received a similar appointment in the Girard Bank. This office he held until his death, oppressed with the debts bequeathed by his failure, supporting his family with difficulty, and leaving them quite destitute at last.

Mr. Forrest was much esteemed for his good sense, his dignified sobriety of demeanor, his strict probity, his modesty and industry. Reserved and taciturn in manners, tall, straight, and slender in person, he was a hard-working, care-worn, devout, and honest man, who strove to be just and true in every relation. He had a pale and sombre face, with regular features, which lighted up with strong expressiveness when he was pleased or earnestly interested. He was somewhat disposed to melancholy, though not at all morose, his depression and reserve being attributable rather to weariness under his enforced struggle with unfavorable conditions than to any native gloom of temper or social antipathy.

Edwin, in his own later years, dwelt with veneration on the memory of his father, and was fond of recalling his early recollections of him, deeply regretting that there was no portrait or daguerreotype of him in existence. He was wont to say that among the sweetest memories that remained to him from his childhood were the rich and musical though plaintive tones of his father's voice, the ringing and honest heartiness of his occasional laugh, and the singular charm of his smile. He said, "I used to think, when my father smiled, the light bursting over his dark and sad countenance,—its very rarity lending it a double

lustre,—I used to think I never saw anything so beautiful." The light of love and joy broke over his sombre features like sunshine suddenly gilding a gray crag.

The unobtrusive, toilsome life of this worthy man, unmarked by any salient points possessing general interest for the public, glided on in even course to the close, darkened by the shadows of material adversity, but brightened by the serene lights of domestic happiness and self-respect. In his poverty he knew many mortifications, many hardships of self-denial and anxious forethought. But in his upright character and blameless conduct, in his retiring and religious disposition, in the kind and respectful regard of all who knew him, he experienced the supports and consolations deserved by such a type of man,—a type common in the middle walks of American society, and as full of merit as it is free from all that is noisy or meretricious. He was not an educated man, not disciplined and adorned by the arts of literary and social culture. But his virtues made him eminently respectable in himself and in his sphere. He came of a good stock, with noble traditions in its veins, endowed with sound judgment, refined nervous fibre, a grave moral tone, and persevering self-reliance. He died of consumption, in 1819, in the sixty-second year of his age. In the death of his youngest son his blood was extinguished, and the fire went out on his family hearth. No member of his lineage remains on earth. The recollections of him, now dim threads in the minds of a few survivors, will soon fall into the unremembering maw of the past. Herein his life and fate have this interest for all, that they so closely resemble those of the great majority of our race. Few can escape this common lot of obscurity and oblivion. Nor should one care much to escape it. It is not possible for all to be conspicuous, famous, envied. Neither is it desirable. The genuine end for all is to be true and good, obedient to their duty, and useful and pleasant to their kind. If they can also be happy, why then, that is another blessing for which to thank God. Beyond a question the most illustrious favorites of fortune, amidst all the glitter and hurrah of their lot, are often less contented in themselves and less loved by their associates than those members of the average condition who attract so little attention while they stay and are forgotten so soon when they have gone. And, mortal limits once passed, what

matters all this to the immortal soul? The rank of a man in the sight of God and his fate in eternity—which are the essential things alike for the loftiest and the lowliest—depend on considerations very different from the tinsel of his station or the noise of his career. One may be poor, weak, obscure, unfortunate, yet be a truly good and happy man. That is the essential victory. Another may be rich, powerful, renowned, enveloped in the luxuries of the earth. If his soul is adjusted to its conditions and wisely uses them, this is a boon still more to be desired; for he too has the essential victory. The real end and aim of life always lie within the soul, not in any exterior prize: still, the best outward conditions may well be the most coveted, although there is no lot which does not yield full compensations, if the occupant of that lot is what he ought to be.

The foregoing sketch, brief and meagre as it is, presents all for which the constructive materials exist.

In turning from the father to the mother of Edwin Forrest, the data are as simple and modest as before, and a still more genial office awaits the biographer. For she was an excellent example of a good woman, gentle, firm, judicious, diligent, cheerful, religious, ever faithful to her duties, the model of what a wife and a mother ought to be. Her son growingly revered and loved her to the very end of his life, as much as a man could do this side of idolatry; and he was anxious that her portrait should be presented and her worth signalized in this book. Ample opportunities will be afforded for doing this.

Rebecca Forrest was, in every sense of the words, a true mate and helpmeet to her husband. He reposed on her with unwavering affection, respect, and confidence, and found unbroken comfort and satisfaction there, whatever might happen elsewhere. Through twenty-five years of happy wedlock she shared all his labors and trials, joys and sorrows, and survived him for a yet longer period, fondly venerating his memory, scrupulously guarding and training his children. Her maiden name was Lauman. Born in Philadelphia, she was of German descent on both sides, her parents having migrated thither in early life, and set up a new hearth-stone, to continue here, in a modified form, the old Teutonic homestead left with tears beyond the sea.

William Forrest and Rebecca Lauman were married in 1795,

he being at that time thirty-seven years old, she thirty-two. Seven children were born to them in succession at quite regular intervals of two years. The nameless boy who preceded Edwin in 1804 died at birth. The remaining six were all baptized in the Episcopal Church of Saint Paul, on Third Street, in Philadelphia, by the Rev. Doctor Pilmore, on the same day, November 13, 1813. The names of these six children, in the order of their birth, were Lorman, Henrietta, William, Caroline, Edwin, and Eleanora.

The first of these to die was Lorman, the eldest of the family. He was a tanner and currier by trade. He was over six feet in height, straight as an arrow, lithe and strong, and of a brave and adventurous disposition. He left home on a filibustering enterprise directed to some part of South America, in his twenty-sixth year, and nothing was heard of him afterwards. The following letter, written by Edwin to his brother William, who was then at Shepherdstown, in Virginia, announces the unfortunate design of poor Lorman:

"PHILADELPHIA, August 1st, 1822.

"DEAR BROTHER,—I received your favor of 29th July, and noted its contents. I am sorry to hear you have such ill luck. Your business in this city is very good.

"Lorman has returned from New York, and intends on Monday next to embark on board a patriot privateer, now lying in this port, for Saint Thomas, and from thence to South America, where, in the patriot service, he has been commissioned 1st lieutenant, at a salary of eighty dollars per month. He screens himself from mother by telling her he is going to Saint Thomas to follow his trade, being loath to inform her of the true cause. A numerous acquaintance accompany him on the said expedition. He wishes me to beg of you not to say anything when you return more than he has allowed himself to say. It is a glorious expedition, and had I not fair prospects in the theatric line I should be induced to go.

"Come on as early as possible. You may stand a chance of getting a berth in the Walnut Street Theatre, or, which is most certain and best, work at your trade.

"Mrs. Riddle has removed her dwelling to a romantic scene in Hamilton Villa. John Moore, advancing above mediocrity, per-

formed Alexander the Great for her benefit. Please write as early as possible. Till then adieu. In haste, your affectionate brother,

"EDWIN."

The expedition proved an ill-starred one, and Lorman perished in it in some unrecorded encounter, passing out of history like an unknown breath. It seems fated that the paths to all great goals shall be strewn with the wrecks of untimely and irregular enterprises, unfortunate but prophetic precursors of the final triumphs. It has been so in the case of the many premature and wrongful attempts to grasp for the flag of the United States those backward and waiting territories destined, perhaps, as the harmonies of Providence weave themselves out, spontaneously to shoot into the web of the completed unity of the Western Continent.

Many a gallant and romantic fellow, many a reckless brawler, many a coarse and vulgar aspirant, many a crudely dreaming and scheming patriot, half inspired, half mad, has fallen a victim to those numerous semi-piratical attempts at conquest which have in the eyes of some flung on our flag the lustre of their promise, in the eyes of others, planted there the stains of their folly and crime. But if there be a systematic plan or divine drift and purport in history, every one of these efforts has had its place, has contributed its quota of influence, has left its seed, yet to spring up and break into flower and fruit. Then every life, buried and forgotten while the slow preparations accumulate, will have a resurrection in the ripe fulfilment of the end for which it was spent. Meanwhile, the brief and humble memory of Lorman Forrest sleeps with the nameless multitude of pioneers the forerunning line of whose graves invites the progress of free America all around the hemisphere.

William, the second son, expired under a sudden attack of bilious colic, at the age of thirty-four. He was a printer, and worked at this trade for several years, buffeted by fortune from place to place. The mechanical drudgery, however, irked him. The lack of opportunity and ability to rise and to better his condition also disheartened and repelled him; and before he was twenty-one he abandoned the business of type-setting for an employment more suited to his tastes. He adopted the theatrical profession and entered on the stage, of which he had been an

amateur votary from his early youth. Their common dramatic aptitudes and aspirations were a strong bond of fellowship between him and his youngest brother, and they had a thousand times practised together at the art of acting, in private, before either made his appearance in public. This coincidence of talent and ambition between the brothers seems to reveal an inherited tendency. The local reputation of the elder, once clear and bright, has been almost utterly lost in the wide and brilliant fame of the younger. It is fitting that it be here snatched from oblivion, at least for a passing moment. For he was both a good man and a good actor, performing his part well alike on the scenic stage and on the real one; though in his case, as in that of most of his contemporaries, the merit was not of such pronounced and impressive relief as to survive in any legible character the obliterating waves of the half-century which has swept across it. Yet his accomplishments, force, and desert were sufficient to make him, in spite of early poverty and premature death, for several years the respected and successful manager of the leading theatre, first of Albany, afterwards of Philadelphia.

The following tribute was paid to him in one of the papers of his native city on the day of his burial:

"When we are awakened from the dreams of mimic life, so vividly portrayed by histrionic skill, to the fatal realities of life itself, the blow falls with double severity. Such was the effect on Monday evening, when, on the falling of the curtain at the Arch Street Theatre, after the first piece, Mr. Thayer stepped forward, announced the *sudden death* of Mr. William Forrest, the Manager, and requested the indulgent sympathy of the audience for the postponement of the remaining entertainments. A shock so sudden and so profound it has seldom been our lot to record. Engaged in his duties all the morning, it appeared but a moment since he had been among us, in the full enjoyment of health, when the hand of the unsparing destroyer struck him down. Mr. Forrest was a great and general favorite among his associates, to whom he was endeared by every feeling of kindness and affection. Few possessed a more placid or even disposition, and few won friends so fast and firmly. In his private relations he was equally estimable, and the loss of him as a son and as a brother will be long and severely felt."

He was also spoken of in the same strain by the journals of Albany, one of them using these words: "Our citizens will regret to read of the death of Mr. William Forrest. He was known here not only as a manager of much taste and enterprise, but as an actor of conceded merit and reputation. He was also esteemed here, as in Philadelphia, by numerous acquaintances for his personal worth and social qualities. The tidings of his decease will be received with sorrow by all who knew him."

So, on the modest actor, manager, and man, after the short and well-meant scene of his quiet, checkered, not unsuccessful life, the curtain fell in swift and tragic close, leaving the mourners, who would often speak kindly of him, to go about the streets for a little while and then fade out like his memory.

The three daughters of the family—none of them ever marrying—lived to see their youngest brother at the height of his fame, and always shared freely in the comforts secured by his prosperity. They were proud of his talents and reputation, grateful for his loving generosity, devoted to his welfare. In his absence from home their correspondence was constantly maintained, and the only interruption their attachment knew was death. Henrietta lived to be sixty-five years old, dying of liver-complaint in 1863. The next, Caroline, died from an attack of apoplexy in 1869, at the age of sixty-seven. And the youngest, Eleanora, after suffering partial paralysis, died of cancer in 1871, being sixty-three years old.

No one among all our distinguished countrymen has been more thoroughly American than Edwin Forrest. From the beginning to the end of his career he was intensely American in his sympathies, his prejudices, his training, his enthusiasm for the flag and name of his country, his proud admiration for the democratic genius of its institutions, his faith in its political mission, his interest in its historic men, his fervent love of its national scenery and its national literature. He was also American in his exaggerated dislike and contempt for the aristocratic classes and monarchical usages of the Old World. He did not seem to see that there are good and evil in every existing system, and that the final perfection will be reached only by a process of mutual giving and taking, which must go on until the malign elements of each are expelled, the benign elements of the whole combined.

In view of the concentrated Americanism of Forrest, it may seem singular that he was himself a child of foreign parentage, his father being Scotch, his mother German. But this fact, which at first appears strange, is really typical. Nothing could be more characteristic of our nationality, which is a composite of European nationalities transferred to these shores, and here mixed, modified, and developed under new conditions. The only original Americans are the barbaric tribes of Indians, fast perishing away, and never suggested to the thought of the civilized world by the word. The great settlements from which the American people have sprung were English, French, Dutch, and Spanish. To these four ethnic rivers were added a dark flood of slaves from Africa, and vast streams of emigration from Ireland and Germany, impregnated with lesser currents from Italy, Sweden, Portugal, Russia, and other countries, adding now portentous signal-waves from China and Japan.

The history of European emigration to America is, in one aspect, a tragedy; in another aspect, a romance. When we think of the hardships suffered, the ties sundered, the farewells spoken, the aching memories left behind, it is a colossal tragedy. When we think of the attractive conditions inviting ahead, the busy plans, the joyous hopes, the prophetic schemes and dreams of freedom, plenty, education, reunion with following friends and relatives, that have gilded the landscape awaiting them beyond the billows, it is a chronic romance. The collective experience in the exodus of the millions on millions of men, women, and children, who, under the goad of trials at home and the lure of blessings abroad, have forsaken Europe for America,—the laceration of affections torn from their familiar objects, the tears and wails of the separation, the dismal discomforts of the voyage, the perishing of thousands on the way, either drawn down the sepulchral mid-ocean or dashed on the rocks in sight of their haven, the long-drawn heart-break of exile, the tedious task of beginning life anew in a strange land,—and then the auspicious opening of the change, the rapid winning of an independence, the quick development of a home-feeling, the assuagement of old sorrows, the conquest of fresh joys and a fast-brightening prosperity broad enough to welcome all the sharers still pouring in endless streams across the sea,—the perception of all this makes

the narrative of American immigration at once one of the most pathetic and one of the most inspiring episodes in the history of humanity. This tale—as a complete account of the emigrant ships, the emigrant trains, the emigrant wagons, the clearings and villages and cities of the receding West, would reveal it—stands unique and solitary in the crowd of its peculiarities among all the records of popular removals and colonial settlements since the dispersion of the Aryan race, mysterious mother of the Indo-European nations, from its primeval seat in the bosom of Asia. All this suffering, all this hope, all this seething toil, has had its mission, still has its purpose, and will have its reward when the predestined effects of it are fully wrought out. Its providential object is to expedite the work of reconciling the divided races, nations, parties, classes, and sects of mankind. The down-trodden poor had groaned for ages under the oppressions of their lot, victims of political tyranny, religious bigotry, social ostracism, and their own ignorance. The traditions and usages of power and caste which surrounded them were so old, so intense, so unqualified, that they seemed hopelessly doomed to remain forever as they were. Then the Western World was discovered. The American Republic threw its boundless unappropriated territory and its impartial chance in the struggle of life open to all comers, with the great prizes of popular education, liberty of thought and speech, and universal equality before the law. The multitudes who flocked in were rescued from a social state where the hostile favoritisms organized and rooted in a remote past pressed on them with the fatality of an atmosphere, and were transferred to a state which offered them every condition and inducement to emancipate themselves from clannish prejudices, superstitions, and disabilities, to flow freely together in the unlimited sympathies of manhood, and form a type of character and civilization as cosmopolitan as their two bases,—charity and science. The significance, therefore, of the colonizing movement from the Old World to the New is the breaking up of the fatal power of transmitted routine, exclusive prerogative and caste, and the securing for the people of a condition inviting them to blend and co-operate on pure grounds of universal humanity. In spite of fears and threats, over all drawbacks, the experiment is triumphantly going on. The prophets who fore-

see the end already behold all the tears it has cost glittering with rainbows.

America being thus wholly peopled with immigrants and the descendants of immigrants, our very nationality consisting in a fresh and free composite made of the tributes from the worn and routinary nations of the other hemisphere, the distinctive glory and design of this last historic experiment of civilization residing in the fact that it presents an unprecedented opportunity for the representatives of all races, climes, classes, and creeds to get rid of their narrow and irritating peculiarities, to throw off the enslaving heritage imposed on them by the hostile traditions and unjust customs of their past, no impartial observer can fail to see the unreasonableness of that bitter prejudice against foreigners which has been so common among those of American birth. This prejudice has had periodical outbreaks in our politics under the name of Native Americanism. In its unreflective sweep it is not only irrational and cruel, but also a gross violation of the true principles of our government, which deal with nothing less than the common interests and truths of universal humanity. And yet, in its real cause and meaning, properly discriminated, it is perfectly natural in its origin, and of the utmost importance in its purport. It is not against foreigners, their unlimited welcome here, their free sharing in the privilege of the ballot and the power of office, that the cry should be raised. That would be to exemplify the very bigotry in ourselves against which we protest in others. It is only against the importation to our shores, and the obstinate and aggravating perpetuation here, of the local vices, the bad blood, the clannish hates, the separate and inflaming antagonisms of all sorts, which have been the chief sources of the sufferings of these people in the lands from which they came to us. In its partisan sense the motto, America for those of American birth, is absurdly indefensible. But the indoctrination of every American citizen, no matter where born or of what parentage, with the spirit of universal humanity *is* our supreme duty. Freedom from proscription and prejudice, a fair course and equal favor for all, an open field for thought, truth, progress,—this expresses the true spirit of the Republic. It is only against what is opposed to this that we should level our example, our argument, and our persuasion. The invitation our flag advertises to

all the world is, Come, share in the bounties of God, nature, and society on the basis of universal justice and good will, untrammelled by partial laws, unvexed by caste monopolies. Welcome to all; but, as they touch the strand, let them cast off and forget the distinguishing badges which would cause one portion to fear or hate, despise or tyrannize over, another portion. Not they who happened to be born here, but they who have the spirit of America, are true Americans.

The father and mother of Edwin Forrest were thoroughly Americanized, and taught him none of the special peculiarities of his Scottish or German ancestry. So far as his conscious training was concerned, in language, religion, social habits, he grew up the same as if his parentage had for repeated generations been American. This was so emphatically the case that all his life long he felt something of the Native American antipathy for foreigners, and cherished an exaggerated sympathy for many of the most pronounced American characteristics. Yet there never was any bigotry in his theoretical politics. His creed was always purely democratic; and so was the core of his soul. He was only superficially infected by the illogical prejudices around him. Whatever deviations he may have shown in occasional word or act, his own example, in his descent and in his character, yielded a striking illustration of the genuine relation which should exist between all the members of our nationality, from whatever land they may hail and whatever shibboleths may have been familiar to their lips. Namely, they should, as soon as possible, forget the quarrels of the past, and hold everything else subordinate to the supreme right of private liberty and the supreme duty of public loyalty, recognizing the true qualifications for American citizenship only in the virtues of American manhood, the American type of manhood being simply the common type liberalized and furthered by the free light and stimulus of republican institutions. Overlook it or violate it whoever may, such is the lesson of the facts before us. And it is a point of the extremest interest that, however much Forrest may sometimes have failed in his personal temper and prejudices to practise this lesson, the constantly emphasized and reiterated exemplification of it in his professional life constitutes his crowning glory and originality as an actor. He was distinctively the first and greatest democrat, as such, that

ever trod the stage. The one signal attribute of his playing was the lifted assertion of the American idea, the superiority of man to his accidents. He placed on the forefront of every one of his celebrated characters in blazing relief the defiant freedom and sovereignty of the individual man.

Thus an understanding of the ground traversed in the present chapter is necessary for the appreciation of his position and rank in the history of the theatre. Boldly rejecting the mechanical traditions of the stage, shaking off the artificial trammels of the established schools of his profession, he looked directly into his own mind and heart and directly forth upon nature, and, summoning up the passionate energies of his soul, struck out a style of acting which was powerful in its personal sincerity and truth, original in its main features, and, above all, democratic and American in its originality.

But though the parents of Edwin did not try to neutralize the influence of purely American circumstances of neighborhood and schooling for their child, they could not help transmitting the organic individual heritage of their respective nationalities in his very generation and development. The generic features and qualities of every one are stamped in his constitution from the historic soil and social climate and organized life of the country of the parents through whom he derives his being from the aboriginal Source of Being. Certain peculiar modes of acting and reacting on nature and things—modes derived from peculiarities of ancestral experience, natural scenery, social institutions, and other conditions of existence—constitute those different styles of humanity called races or nations. These peculiarities of constitution, temper, taste, conduct, looks, characterize in varying degrees all the individuals belonging to a country, making them Englishmen, Spaniards, Russians, Turks, or Chinese. These characteristics, drawn from what a whole people have in common, are transmitted by parents to their progeny and inwrought in their organic being by a law as unchangeable as destiny,—nay, by a law which *is* destiny. The law may, in some cases, baffle our scrutiny by the complexity of the elements in the problem, or it may be qualified by fresh conditions, but it is always there, working in every point of plasma, every fibril of nerve, every vibration of force. The law of heredity is obscured

or masked in several ways. First, the peculiarities of the two lines of transmitted ancestry, from father and from mother, may in their union neutralize each other, or supplement each other, or exaggerate each other, or combine to form new traits. Secondly, they may be modified by the reaction of the original personality of the new being, and also by the reaction of the new conditions in which he is placed. Still, the law is there, and works. It is at once the fixed fatality of nature and the free voice of God.

Edwin Forrest was fortunate in the national bequests of brain and blood or structural fitnesses and tendencies which he received from his fatherland and from his motherland. The distinctive national traits of the Scottish and of the German character, regarded on the favorable side, were signally exemplified in him. The traits of the former are courage, acuteness, thrift, tenacity, clannishness, and patriotism; of the latter, reasoning intelligence, poetic sentiment, honesty, personal freedom, capacity for systematic drill, and open sense of humanity. These two lines of prudential virtue and expansive sympathy were marked in his career. The attributes of weakness or vice that belonged to him were rather human than national. So the Caledonian and Teutonic currents that met in his American veins were an inheritance of goodness and strength.

Nor was he less fortunate in the bequeathal of strictly personal qualities from his individual parents. Those conditions of bodily and mental life, the offshoot of the conjoined being of father and mother, imprinted and inwoven and ever operative in all the globules of his blood and all the sources of his volition, were far above the average both in the physical power and in the moral rank they gave. His father was a tall, straight, sinewy man, who lived to his sixty-second year a life of hardship and care, without the aid of any particular knowledge of the laws of health. His mother was of an uncommonly strong, well-balanced, and healthy constitution, who bore seven children, worked hard, saw much trouble, but lived in equanimity to her seventy-fifth year. From the paternal side no special tendency to any disease is traceable; on the maternal side, only, through the grandfather, who was an inveterate imbiber of claret, that germ of the gout which ripened to such terrible mischief for him. In intellectual, moral, and religious endowments and habits, both parents were

of a superior order, remarked by all who knew them for sound sense, sterling virtue, unwearied industry, devout spirit and carriage. The good, strong, consecrated stock, both national and personal, they gave their boy, alike by generative transmission, by example, and by precept, was of inexpressible service to him. He never forgot it or lost it. It stood him in good stead in a thousand trying hours. Amidst the constant and intense temptations of his exposed professional life, it gave him superb victories over the worst of those vices to which hundreds of his fellows succumbed in disgraceful discomfiture and untimely death. It is true he yielded to follies and sins,—as, under such exposures, who would not?—but his sense of honor and his memory of his mother kept him from doing anything which would destroy his self-respect and give him a bad conscience. This inestimable boon he owed to the moral fibre of his birth and early training.

The thoughtful reader will not deem that the writer is making too much of these preliminary matters. Besides their intrinsic interest and value, they are vitally necessary for the full understanding of much that is to follow. In the formation of the character and the shaping of the career of any man the circumstance of supremest power is the ancestral spirits which report themselves in him from the past, and the organific influences of blood and nerve brought to bear on him in the mystic world of the womb previous to his entrance into this breathing theatre of humanity. The ignorance and the squeamishness prevalent in regard to the subject of the best raising of children are the causes of indescribable evils ramifying in all directions. It has been tabooed from the province of public study and teaching, although no other matter presents such pressing and sacred claims on universal attention. It cannot always continue to be so neglected or forced into the dark. The young giant, Social Science, so rapidly growing, will soon insist on the thorough investigation of it, and on the accordant organization in practice of the truths which shall be elicited. When by analysis, generalization, experiment, and all sorts of methods and tests, men shall have ransacked every other subject, it may be hoped, they will begin to apply a little study to the one subject of really paramount importance,—the breeding of their own species. When the same scientific care and skill, based on accumulated and sifted knowl-

edge, shall be devoted to this province as has already been exemplified with such surprising results in the improvement of the breeds of sheep, cows, horses, hens, and pigeons, still more amazing achievements may be confidently expected. The ranks of hopeless cripples, invalids, imbeciles, idlers, and criminals will cease to be recruited. The rate of births may perhaps be reduced to one-fourth of what it now is, with a commensurate elevation of the condition of society by the weeding out of the perishing and dangerous classes. And the rate of infant mortality may be reduced to one per cent. of its present murderous average. The regeneration of the world will be secured by the perfecting of its generation.

These ideas were familiar to Forrest. He often spoke of them, and wondered they were so slow to win the notice they deserved. For the hypocrisy or prudery which affected to regard them as indelicate and to be shunned in polite speech, he expressed contempt. In his soul the chord of ancestral lineage which bound his being with a vital line running through all foregone generations of men up to the Author of men, was, as he felt it, exceptionally intense and sacred. And surely the whole subject of our consanguinity in time and space is, to every right thinker, as full of poetic attraction and religious awe on one side as it is of scientific interest and social importance on the other.

Each of us has two parents, four grandparents, eight great-grandparents, sixteen great-great-grandparents. In every receding generation the number doubles, from thirty-two to sixty-four, then to one hundred and twenty-eight, and so on; so that at the twentieth remove, omitting the factor of intermarriages, one has over a million ancestors! So many threads of nerve thrilling into him out of the dark past! So many invisible rivulets of blood tributary to the ocean of his heart, the collective experiences of all of them latently reported in his structure! His physiological mould and type, his mental biases and passional drifts, his longevity, and other prospective experiences and fate, are the resultant of these combined contributions modified by his own choice and new circumstances. What can be conceived more solemnly impressive, or to us morally more sublime and momentous, than this picture of an immortal personality, isolated in his own responsible thought amidst the universe, but surrounded by the mys-

terious ranks of his ancestry, all connected with him by spiritual ligaments which lengthen and multiply, but never break, as he tracks them, further and further, through the annals of time, through prehistoric ages, incapable of solution or pause till his faith apprehends the beginning of their tremulous lines in the creative fiat of God!

Indulge in whatever theories we may, whether of continuous development or of sudden creation, it is through our parents that we receive our being. It is through our ancestry, spreading ultimately back to the limits of the human race, that each of us descends from God. By them it is that the Creator creates us. Well may the great Asiatic races, the soft and contemplative Brahmins, the child-like Chinese, the pure and thoughtful Parsees, worship their unknown Maker in forms of reverential remembrance and adoration paid to their known ancestors, gathering their relics in dedicated tombs or temples, cherishing their names and examples and precepts with fond devotion, celebrating pensive and glad festivals in their honor, preparing, around their pious offerings of fruits and flowers, little seats of grass, in a circle, for the pleased guardian spirits of their recalled fathers and mothers invisibly to occupy. Let not the reckless spirit of Young America, absorbed in the chase of material gain, and irreverent of everything but sensuous good, call it all a superstition and a folly. There is truth in it, too, and a hallowing touch of the universal natural religion of humanity.

America, in her hasty and incompetent contempt for the dotage, fails to appropriate the wisdom of the Orient. More of their humility, leisure, meditation, reverence, aspiration, mystic depth of intuition, will do us as much good as more of our science, ingenuity, independence, and enterprise will do them. The American people, in their deliverance from the entrammelling conditions of the over-governed Old World, and their exciting naturalization on the virgin continent of the West, have, to some extent, erred in affixing their scorn and their respect to the wrong objects. In repudiating excessive or blind loyalty to titular superiors and false authority, they have lost too much of the proper loyalty to real superiors and just authority. They are too much inclined to be contented with respectability and the average standard, instead of aspiring to perfection by the divine standard.

They show too much deference to public opinion, and are too eagerly drawn after the vulgar prizes of public pursuit,—money and social position,—to the comparative neglect of personal reflection and culture, personal honor, and detachment in a self-sustaining insight of principles. They think too subserviently of what is established, powerful, fashionable,—the very vice from which the founders of the country fled hither. They think too meanly and haltingly of the truth and good which are not yet established and fashionable, but ought to be so,—thus turning their backs on the very virtue which heaven and earth command them in especial to cultivate, namely, the virtue of an unflinching spirit of progress in obedience to whatever is right and desirable as against whatever wrongfully continues to govern. The best critics from abroad, and the wisest observers at home, agree that the most distinctive vice in the American character is described by the terms complacent rashness and assumption, crude impertinence, disrespect to age, irreverence towards parents, contempt for whatever does not belong to itself. This rampant democratic royalty in everybody has proved sadly detrimental to that spirit of modesty and docility which, however set against oppression and falsehood, is profoundly appreciative of everything sacred or useful and sits with veneration at the feet of the past to garner up its treasures with gratitude. The American who improves instead of abusing his national privileges will maintain his private convictions and not bend his knee slavishly to public opinion, but he will treat the feelings of others with tenderness, bow to all just authority, and reverently uncover his heart before everything that he sees to be really sacred.

On these points, it will be seen in the subsequent pages, the subject of the present biography, as a boldly-pronounced American citizen, was in most respects a good example. If occasionally, in some things, he practised the American vice,—self-will, unconscious bigotry intrenched in a shedding conceit,—he prevailingly exemplified the American virtue,—tolerance, frankness, generosity, a sympathetic forbearance in the presence of what was venerable and dear to others, although it was not so to him. While withholding his homage from merely conventional sanctities, he never scoffed at them; and he always instinctively worshipped those intrinsic sanctities which carry their divine

credentials in their own nature. The filial and fraternal spirit in particular was very strong in him, and bore rich fruits in his life and conduct.

The conspicuous relative decay of the filial and fraternal virtues, or weakening of the family tie, among the American people, the precocious development and self-assertion of their children, wear an evil aspect, and certainly are not charming. Yet they may be inevitable phases in the evolution of the final state of society. They may distinguish a transitional stage through which all countries will have to pass, America being merely in the front. In ancient life the political and social unit was the family. The whole family was held strictly responsible for the deeds of each member of it. The drift marked by democracy is to make the individual the ultimate unit in place of the family, legally clearing each person from his consanguineous entanglements, and holding him responsible solely for his own deeds in relation to entire society. The movement towards individuality is disintegrating; but, when completed, it may, by a terminal conversion of opposites, play into a more intimate fellowship and harmony of the whole than has ever yet been realized on earth. Thus it is not impossible that the narrower and intenser domestic bonds may be giving way simply before the extruding growth of wider and grander bonds, the particular yielding merely as the universal advances. If the destiny of the future be some form of social unity, some public solidarity of sympathies and interests in which all shall mutually identify themselves with one another, then the temporary irreverences and insurgences of a democratic régime may have their providential purpose and their abundant compensation in that final harmony of co-operative freedom and obedience to which they are preparing the way out of priestly and monarchical régimes.

Either this is the truth, that the youthful insubordination and premature complacency, the rarity of generous friendships and the commonness of sinister rivalries, which mark our time and land are necessary accompaniments of the passage from individual loyalties to collective loyalties, from an antagonistic to a communistic civilization, or else our republicanism is but the repetition of a stale experiment, doomed to renewed failure. There are political horoscopists who predict the subversion of

the American Republic and its replacement by a monarchy. Thickening corruption and strife between two hostile parties over a vast intermediate stratum of indifference prompt the observer to such a conclusion. But a more auspicious faith is that these ills are to be overruled for good. It is more likely that both republicanism and monarchy, in their purest forms, are to vanish in behalf of a third, as yet scarcely known, form of government, which will give the final solution to the long-vexed problem, namely, government by scientific commissions which will know no prejudice, but represent all in the spirit of justice.

The exact knowledge, co-operative power, and disciplined skill chiefly exemplified hitherto in war, or in great business enterprises conducted in the exclusive interests of their supporters against all others,—this combination, universalized and put on a basis of disinterestedness, seeking the good of an entire nation or the entire world, will furnish the true form of government now wanted. For no government of the many by the few in the spirit of will, whether that will represents the minority or the majority, can be permanent. The only everlasting or truly divine government must be one free from all will except the will of God, one which shall guide in the spirit of science by demonstrated laws of truth and right, representing the harmonized good of the whole.

In view of such a possible result, the trustful American, comparing his people with Asiatics or with Europeans, can regard without fear the apparent change of certain forms of virtue into correlative forms of vice; because he holds that this is but a transient disentwining of the moral and religious tendrils from around smaller and more selfish objects in preparation for their permanent re-entwining around greater and more disinterested ones, when private families shall dissolve into a universal family, or their separate interests be conformed to its collective interests. All humanity is the family of God, and perhaps the historic selfishness of the lesser families may crumble into individualities in order to re-combine in the universal welfare of this.

Meanwhile, it may well be maintained that the repulsive swagger of self-assertion sometimes seen here is a less evil than the degrading servility and stagnant spirit of caste often seen elsewhere. The desideratum is to construct out of the alienated races

and classes of men here thrown together, jarring with their distinctions and prejudices, yet under conditions of unprecedented favorableness, a new type of character, carrying in its freed and sympathetic intelligence all the vital and spiritual traditions of humanity. There are but two methods to this end: one, the intermingling of the varieties in generative descent; the other, the personal assimilation of contrasting experiences and qualities by mutual sympathetic interpretation and assumption of them. This latter process is the very process and business of the dramatic art. The true player is the most detached, versatile, imaginative, and emotional style of man, most capable of understanding, feeling with, and reproducing all other styles, best fitted, therefore, to mediate between hostile clans and creeds and reconcile the dissonant parts of society and the race in its final cosmopolite harmony.

Consequently, among the public agencies of culture destined to educate the American people out of their defects and faults into a complete accordant manhood—if, as is fondly hoped, that happy destiny be reserved for them—the dramatic art will have an unparalleled place of honor assigned to it. The dogmatic Church, so busy in toothlessly mumbling the formulas of an extinct faith that it loses sight of the living truths of God in nature and society, will be heeded less and less as it slowly dies its double death in drivel of words and drivel of ceremonies. But the plastic Stage, clearing itself of its abuses and carelessness, and receiving a new inspiration at once religious in its sacred earnestness and artistic in its free range of recreative play, will become more and more influential as it learns to exemplify the various ideals of human nature and human life set off by their graded foils, and presents the gravest teachings disguised in the finest amusements.

In the democratic idea, every man is called on to be a priest and a king unto God. Church and State, in all their forms and disguises, have sought to monopolize those august rôles for a few; but the Theatre, in the examples of its great actors, has instinctively sought to fling their secrets open to the whole world; and, when fully enlightened by the Academy, it will clearly teach what it has thus far only obscurely hinted. It will reveal the hidden secrets of power and rank, the just arts of sway, and

the iniquitous artifices of despotism. And it will assert the indefeasible claim of every man, so far as he wins personal fitness and desert, to have open before him a free passage through all the spheres and heights of social humanity. The greatest player is the one who can most perfectly represent the largest scale of characters, keeping each in its exact truth and grade, yet passing freely through them all. That, too, is the moral ground and essence of democracy, whose basis is thus the same as that of the dramatic art,—namely, a free and intelligent sympathy giving men the royal freedom of mankind by right of eminent domain. The priesthood and kingship of man are universal in kind, but endlessly varied in degree, no two men on earth nor no two angels in heaven having such a monotonous uniformity that they cannot be discriminated. Each one has an original stamp and relish of native personality. The law of infinite perfection, even in liberty itself, is perfect subordination in the infinite degrees of superiority.

These opposed and balancing truths found a magnificent impersonation on the stage in Edwin Forrest, and made him preeminently the representative American actor. All his great parts set in emphatic relief the intrinsic sovereignty of the individual man, the ideal of a free manhood superior to all artificial distinctions or circumstances. He showed man as inherent king of himself, and also relative king over others in proportion to his true superiority in worth and weight. When Tell confronted Gessler, or Rolla appeared with the Inca, or Spartacus stood before the Emperor, or Cade defied the King, or Metamora scorned the Englishman, the titular monarch was nothing in the tremendous presence of the authentic hero. Genuine virtue, power, and nobleness took the crown and sceptre away from empty prescription. This was grand, and is the lesson the American people need to learn. It enthrones the truth, while repudiating the error, of vulgar democracy. That error would interpret the doctrine of equal rights into a flat and dead uniformity, a stagnant level of similarities; but that truth affirms an endless variety of degrees with a boundless liberty around all, each free to fit himself for all the privileges of human nature according to his ability, and entitled to enjoy those privileges in proportion to the fitness he attains. The principle of order, rank, authority, hierarchy, is as omnipotent and sacred in genuine democracy as

it is in nature or the government of God. The American idea, as against the Asiatic and European, would not destroy the principle of precedence, but would make that principle the intrinsic force and merit of the individual, instead of any historic or artificial prerogative. It asserts that there must be no horizontal caste or stratum in society to prevent the vertical any more than the level circulation of the political units. It declares that there shall be no despotic fixtures reserving the most desirable and authoritative places for any arbitrary sets of persons, but that there shall be divine liberty for the ablest and best to gravitate by divine right to the highest places. That is the American idea purified and completed. That, also, is the central lesson of the dramatic art in its crowning triumphs on the popular stage. And in the half-inspired, half-conscious representation of it lay the commanding originality of Edwin Forrest, our first national tragedian.

The foregoing thoughts put us in possession of the data and place us at the point of view for an intelligent and interested survey of the field before us. And we will now proceed to the proper narrative of the biographic details, and to the critical delineation of the professional features suggested by the title of our work.

CHAPTER III.

BOYHOOD AND YOUTH.

When Edwin was born, his father, encumbered and oppressed by the debts which his failure some years before had entailed on him, was serving in a bank, at a small salary. The family, consisting then of the parents and five children, were forced to live in a very humble style, and to practise a stern economy. For many years they endured the trials and hardships of poverty almost in its extremities. Yet, by dint of industry, character, and tidiness, they managed to maintain respectable appearances and a fair position. Both the father and mother were exemplary members of the Episcopal Church, under the pastoral charge of the Rev. Doctor Pilmore, on whose Sunday services they, with their children, were regular attendants.

What they most lamented was their inability to give their boys and girls the education and accomplishments whose absence in themselves their strong judgment and refined sensibility caused them deeply to regret. But they sought to make such compensation as they could by example, by precept, by directing in the formation of their habits and the choice of their associates, and by keeping them at the public schools as long as possible.

Lorman, the eldest son, when of the proper age to earn his living, was apprenticed to a tanner and currier. William, at a later period, was set at work in a printing-office. Henrietta, the eldest daughter,—as could not be avoided,—was early taken from under the rule of the school-mistress to the side of her mother, to help in the increasing labors of the household. Edwin went constantly to the public school nearest his home, from the age of five to thirteen, together with his eldest sister, Caroline, and also, for the last six years, with his youngest sister, Eleanora.

During this period the life of the family presents little besides that plain and humble story of toil, domestic fidelity, social strug-

gle, self-denial, and patience familiar in our country to a multitude of families in the middle and lower walks. In the mean while, duties were done, simple pleasures were enjoyed, plans were formed, hopes were disappointed, the seasons came round, the years moved on, changes occurred, experiences accumulated, as will happen to all, whether rich or poor.

The youngest son gave more striking signs of talent than any of the rest, and naturally the fonder anticipations of his parents centred in him. They meant, at any cost, if it were a possible thing, to give him such an education and training as would fit him for the Christian ministry. They were led to this determination by the counsel of their pastor, by their own pronounced religious feelings, and by the most distinctive gift of the boy himself. That gift was the marked power and taste of his elocution. It is interesting, and seems strange, as we look back now, to think of the destiny of Forrest had the original intention of his parents been carried out. Perhaps he would have become a bishop, and a judicious and influential one. It is certainly not impossible; so much do circumstances, companions, aims, duties, the daily routine of life, contribute to make us what we are. The essential germ or monad of the personality is unextinguishable, but its development may be amazingly fostered and guided or twisted and stunted. The coin of manhood remains what it is in itself, but its image and superscription are determined by the mould and die with which it is struck.

Edwin had a sweet, expressive, vigorous voice, with natural accent and inflection, free from the common mechanical mannerisms. His superiority in this respect over all his comrades was signal. With that unsparing tendency to let down every superiority, to level all distinctions, which is so characteristic of the rude democracy of the school-yard and the play-ground, his fellows nicknamed him the Spouter!

From his very first attendance at church, when a mere child in petticoats, he was much impressed by the imposing appearance and preaching of Dr. Joseph Pilmore. Father Pilmore was a large man, with a deep, rich voice, a manner of emphatic earnestness, his long powdered hair falling down his shoulders after the fashion of an Addisonian wig. The boy would not leave the pew until the old pastor came along, patted him on the head, and gave

him a blessing. He would then go home, make a pulpit of a stuffed semicircular chair with a pillow placed on the top of its back for a cushion, mount into it, and preach over from memory parts of the sermon he had just heard,—with his sisters, and such other persons as might be at hand, for an audience. At such times, before he would consent to declaim, he used to insist on having his costume, namely, a pair of spectacles across his nose, and a long pair of tongs over his neck, their legs coming down his breast to represent the bands of the preacher.

To the end of his life he retained a most grateful remembrance of his first pastor. The picture of him as he used to appear in the pulpit always remained in his imagination, a venerable image, unfaded, unblurred. One favorite gesture of the reverend orator, a forcible smiting of his breast, took such hold of the young observer that it haunted him for years after he had gone upon the stage; and he found himself often involuntarily copying it, even in situations where it was not strictly appropriate.

Such were the grace, propriety, and vigor displayed by the infantile declaimer, that when he went, as he often did, to see his brother Lorman in the tannery where he was employed, the workmen would lift him upon a stone table designed for dressing leather, listen to his recitations, and reward him with their applause.

Among the most valued friends of the Forrest family at this time was an elderly Scotchman, of great cultivation of mind, gentle heart, and charming manners, who had seen much of the world, was an intense lover of nature, possessed of fine literary taste and a rare natural piety of soul. He delighted in talking over with his friend their common memories of dear old Scotland, often quoting from Ferguson, Burns, and other Caledonian celebrities. This was no less a person than the famous ornithologist, Alexander Wilson; a man of sweet character, whose pictures of birds, descriptions of nature, and effusions of sentiment can never fail to give both pleasure and edification to those who linger over his limpid and sinless pages. The little boy, fascinated by the gentle personality, as well as by the picturesque conversation, so different from that of the business or working men he usually heard, was wont, on occasions of these visits, to draw near and attend to what was said. One day his father exclaimed,

"Come, Edwin, let us hear you recite the speech of the Shepherd Boy of the Grampian Hills." Wilson at once recognized the remarkable promise of the lad, and from that time took a deep interest in him. He often heard him read and declaim, corrected his faults, gave him good models of delivery, and called his attention to excellent pieces for committing to memory. He taught him several of the best poems of Robert Burns. Among these were the Dirge beginning

> "When chill November's surly blast
> Made fields and forests bare,"

and the exquisite verses "To Mary in Heaven,"—

> "Thou lingering star with lessening ray,
> That lov'st to greet the early morn."

When the eager learner had mastered a new piece, he was all alive until he could recite it to Wilson, who used to encourage and reward him with gifts of the plates of his great work on American Ornithology, which was then passing through the press. The service thus rendered was of inestimable value. The picture is beautiful: the wise and loving old man leaning in spontaneous benignity and joy over the aspiring and grateful child,—forming his taste, moulding his mind and heart. In a case like this, nothing can be more charming than the relation of teacher and pupil. It is that proper and artistic relation of experienced age and docile youth immortalized by antique sculpture in the exquisite myth of Cheiron and Achilles. Forrest never forgot his indebtedness to his early benefactor, but in his last days was fond of citing, with admiring pathos, the dying words of his old friend: "Bury me where the sun may shine on my grave and the birds sing over it."

Things were going on with the Forrest household in this modest and hopeful way, when the heaviest calamity it had ever known befell it. The death of its head, and the consequent cessation of his salary, left the family destitute of the means of support. The good and judicious mother showed herself equal to the emergency. Drying her tears and holding her heart firm, she undertook to fulfil the offices of both parents. With such

help as she could get, she bought a little stock of goods and opened a millinery-shop. In the mean time the two older sons were earning a little at their trades, and the two older daughters assisted their mother. They made bonnets, and various articles of needle-work, while she worked, in her spare hours, at binding shoes. In the later years of the proud fame and wealth of Forrest, as these scenes floated back into his memory, his heart visibly swelled under his breast, and tears filled his eyes.

The youngest daughter, then eleven, was kept at school. But it was found necessary to abandon the plan of educating Edwin for the clerical profession. Reluctantly his mother took him from school, and put him at service, first, for a short time, in the printing-office of the "Aurora," under Colonel Duane, where he was known as "Little Edwin," then in a cooper-shop on the wharf, and finally in a ship-chandlery store on Race Street. This was in 1819, when he was thirteen years old.

Several years previously his taste for dramatic expression had directed his attention to the stage. He had developed a keen love for theatrical entertainments, and he let no opportunity of attending the theatre go by unimproved. He found frequent means of gratifying this desire, although his parents strongly disapproved of it. He also, in company with his brother William, joined a Thespian club, composed of boys and young men possessed with the same passion for theatricals as himself, and gave much of his leisure time to their meetings and performances. Many a time he and his fellows performed plays in a wood-shed, fitted up for the purpose, to an eager audience of boys, the price of admittance being sometimes five pins, sometimes an apple or a handful of raisins.

The place he most delighted to visit was the old South Street Theatre, long since passed away, with its great pit surmounted by a double row of boxes. The most prominent object, midway in the first tier, was what was called the Washington Box. This was adorned with the insignia of the United States, and had often been occupied by Washington and his family in the days when Philadelphia was the capital of the nation. The boy used to regard this box with intense reverence. It was in this theatre, then under the management of Charles Porter, that Forrest, a lad of eleven, made his first public appearance on any stage. The

circumstances were amusing. He was in the street, playing marbles on the pavement with some other urchins, when Porter came along, and said to him, "Can you perform the part of a girl in a play?" "Why?" asked Edwin, looking up in surprise. "Because," replied the manager, "the girl who was to perform the character is sick." "Do you want me to take the part?" "Yes. Will you?" "When is it to be played?" "To-morrow night." "I will do it," answered the inconsiderate youth, triumphantly. Porter gave him a play-book, pointed out the part he was to study, and left him.

Edwin began forthwith, and was soon quite up in the part. But how to provide himself with a suitable costume for the night! This was a great difficulty. At length, bethinking him of a female acquaintance of his, whose name was Eliza Berryman, he went to her and borrowed what was needful in general, but not in particular.

Night came on, and the boy, as a substitute for a girl, was to take the part of Rosalia de Borgia, in the romantic melodrama of Rudolph, or the Robbers of Calabria. He went to the theatre and donned the dress. Finding himself in want of a bosom, he tore off some portions of scenery and stuffed them about his breast under the gown, and was ready for the curtain to rise. He had been provided by the kind Eliza with a sort of turban for the head, and for ringlets he had placed horse-hair done into a bunch of curls. The first scene displayed Rosalia de Borgia at the back of the stage, behind a barred and grated door, peering out of a prison. As she stood there, she was seen by the audience, and applauded. They could not then well discern her rugged and somewhat incongruous appearance. Pretty soon Rosalia came in front, before the foot-lights. Then at once rose a universal guffaw from the assembly. She looked about, a little disconcerted, for the cause of this merriment. To her intense sorrow and disgust, she found that her gown and petticoat were quite too short, and revealed to the audience a most remarkably unfeminine pair of feet, ankles, and legs.

He stood it for a time, until a boy in the pit, one of his mates, whom he had told that he was going to play, and who was there to see him, yelled out, "The heels and the big shoes! Hi yi! hi yi! Look at the legs and the feet!" Forrest, placing his

hand over his mouth, turned to the boy, and huskily whispered, "Look here, chap, you wait till the play is done, and I'll lick you like hell!" Then the boy in the pit bawled out, "Oh, she swears! she swears!" The audience were convulsed with laughter, the curtain came down, and poor Rosalia de Borgia, all perspiration, was hustled off the stage in disgrace.

This ludicrous failure was his first, and, with one exception, his last, appearance in a female part.

But he was not of a strain to give up in discomfiture. He determined to appear again, and in something which he knew he could do well. Accordingly, having prepared himself thoroughly in the famous epilogue written by Goldsmith for Lee Lewis in the character of Harlequin, he asked the manager to allow him another chance on the stage of the South Street Theatre. Porter replied, rather roughly, "Oh, you be damned! you have disgraced us enough already!" Deeply aggrieved by this rebuff, young Forrest yet resolved to speak his piece at any rate. So, one night, dressed in tight pantaloons and a close round jacket, he went behind the scenes, got some paint of the scene-painter, and painted his clothes, as well as he could, with stripes and diamonds, in resemblance of a harlequin. Then, watching an opportunity, in the absence of the manager from the stage, at the ringing down of the curtain he suddenly sprang before the foot-lights, and, to the astonishment of the audience, began,—

> "Hold, prompter, hold! a word before your nonsense;
> I'd speak a word or two to ease my conscience.
> My pride forbids it ever should be said
> My heels eclipsed the honors of my head."

At the word "heels" the audience took the joke, and, recognizing the boy, loudly applauded him. Encouraged thus, he went on, and spoke the whole epilogue in a most creditable manner, with thunders of applause from the audience, and from manager Porter too, who had now come in. Concluding with the last line,—

> "And at one bound he saves himself—like me,"—

Forrest turned a hand-spring and a flip-flap, and made his exit, to the complete amazement of everybody in the theatre. He was

vociferously encored, again made his appearance, turned his flip-flap, and spoke his piece even better than before. Encored still again, he did not come back, but betook himself to his home as soon as possible, rejoicing in the belief that the glory of his present triumph would offset the shame of his previous fiasco.

Somewhat later he was duly announced in the bills, and repeated the performance between the play and the after-piece, with as good success as on the first occasion.

He kept his word with the boy in the pit, whose pointed remarks and loud laughter had so much annoyed and provoked him. He inflicted the promised thrashing, though—as he said, in relating the incident more than fifty years later—it was one of the toughest jobs he ever undertook. As soon as the combatants were satisfied, the victor and the victim made up, shook hands, and remained ever afterwards firm friends.

A little domestic scene which occurred about this time may fitly be introduced here, as illustrating the character and influence of the mother, and also, as will appear in a subsequent chapter, the assimilating docility of the child. It was a Sunday afternoon, in the summer. The tired and careful mother sat at the open window, the sunshine streaming across the floor, gazing at the passers in the street, and musing, perhaps, on times long gone by. Edwin was turning the leaves of a large pictorial copy of the Bible. A sudden explosion of laughter was heard from him. "What are you laughing at, my boy? It seems unbecoming, with that book in your hands." "Why, mother, I cannot help it; it is so absurd. Here is a picture of the grapes of Eshcol; and the bunches of them are so big and heavy that it takes two men, with a pole across their shoulders, to carry them along! Is it not funny?" "Edwin, come to me," replied the mother, with calm seriousness. Taking his hand in hers, and looking steadily in his eyes, she said, "Do you not think it very presumptuous and conceited in you, so young, so ignorant, knowing only the climate and fruits of Pennsylvania, to set yourself up to pronounce judgment in this way on the artist who most likely had at his service the experience of travellers in all countries? It is more than probable that in those tropical climes where the Bible was written the vines might grow almost into trees, and bear clusters of grapes ten times larger than any you ever saw. Modesty is one

of the best traits in a young person. I want you to remember never again to laugh at the fancied ignorance and absurdity of another, when perhaps the ignorance and absurdity are all your own." However often he may have failed to practise the lesson, yet when, fifty-five years afterwards, the old actor related the incident, the beating of his heart, the tenderness of his voice, and the moisture in his eyes, turned reverently towards the portrait of his mother on the wall, showed how profoundly the influence of that hour had sunk into his soul.

When Master Forrest was in the first part of his fourteenth year, he chanced one evening to be in the audience of a lecturer, in the old Tivoli Garden Theatre, on Market Street, who was discoursing on the properties of nitrous oxide, or, as it is more commonly called, laughing-gas. The lecturer invited any of his auditors who desired to come forward and inhale the exhilarating aura. The chance was one just suited to the disposition of our hero. He stepped up and applied his mouth and nostrils to the bag. In a moment, as the air began to work, his ruling passion broke forth. Striking out right and left, to the no slight consternation of those nearest him, he advanced to the front of the stage, and declaimed a famous passage from the stage-copy of Shakspeare,—

> "What ho! young Richmond, ho! 'tis Richard calls:
> I hate thee for thy blood of Lancaster,"—

with extraordinary energy and effect. John Swift, an eminent lawyer of that day, and a very cultivated and generous man, was so struck by the dramatic talent and force of the lad that he took the pains to seek him out and make his acquaintance, befriending him in the noblest manner, and often thereafter giving him kind counsel and assistance.

Despite his constantly-growing zeal and devotion to dramatic matters, Edwin kept his situation in the ship-chandlery store, and was tolerably faithful to its duties. But his heart was not in the business. The counter and the ledger had no charms for him. All his young enthusiasm was for the play-book and the stage. His employer often found him in a corner conning Shakspeare, or in the back office practising declamation. He said to him one day, with a shake of his wiseacre head, "Ah, boy, this theatrical

infatuation will be your ruin! The way to thrive is to be attentive to trade. Did you ever know a play-actor to get rich?" But all this prudential advice, this chill preaching of the shop, was utterly ineffectual on the strong imaginative bent and passionate ambition it encountered.

While carrying parcels home to the customers of the firm, he sometimes met with such adventures as a boy of his high and pugnacious spirit would be likely to meet with in those times, when wrestling and fighting were much more common, especially among boys, than they are now. On a certain occasion, jostled and jeered by an older and bigger boy than himself, he said, "You wait till I can deliver this bundle and get back here, and I will fight you to your heart's content." The fellow agreed to it. Away hied Edwin, and deposited his goods. He then ran home and put on an old suit of clothes, to be in better fighting trim. His mother asked him what he was going to do; and when he explained, she begged him not to go, and used such arguments as she could command to impress him with the wickedness and vulgarity of such brutal encounters. But all in vain. "Mother," he said, "I have pledged my word; I must do it. It would be mean not to." And he tore away, repaired to the rendezvous, and, after a tough bout, gave his insulter a terrible thrashing, and went quietly back to the ship-chandlery. It must be confessed that, though inwardly tender and generous, he was rough, easy to quarrel with, and not slow to go to the extremes of fists and heels.

But one of the severest traits in him, all his life, one of the deepest characteristics of his individuality, was the barbaric intensity of his wrath against those who wronged him, the Indian-like bitterness and tenacity of the spirit of revenge in his breast when aroused by what he thought any wanton injury. He never laid claim to the spirit of saintliness, but rather trod it under foot, as affectation, pitiful weakness, or hypocrisy. This marked a gross limit of his moral sensibility in his own personal relations, though he could keenly appreciate the finest touches of abnegation and magnanimity in others. To justice, as he saw it, he was always loyal. But, when his selfhood was wounded, the pain of the bruise not rarely, perhaps, made him a little blind or perverse. Two anecdotes of his boyhood throw light on this

point. In the one example he was, as it would seem, morally without excuse; in the other, pardonable, but scarcely to be approved.

He was eating an apple in the street, when he came to a horse attached to a baker's cart, standing beside the curb-stone. He amused himself by holding the apple under the horse's nose, and, as often as the animal tried to bite it, suddenly snatching it away, and fetching him a blow on the mouth. At that mischievous moment the driver of the cart came up, and, crying out, "What are you doing there, you damned little scoundrel?" gave him a piercing cut across the leg with his whip. The little fellow limped off in excruciating pain, but carefully marked his enemy. The passion for revenge burned in him. He kept a sharp lookout. Within a week he spied the driver a short distance ahead. He picked up a stone, took good aim, and, striking him on the back of the head, knocked him from his cart into the street. He then dismissed the subject from his mind, satisfied that he had squared accounts. Many would hold that, instead of squaring accounts, he had only made a bad matter worse. But such was his way of regarding it; and the business of a biographer is to tell the truth.

The other instance is impressive in its teaching. On a cold winter morning he was trundling along the sidewalk a wheelbarrow loaded with articles from the store. A Quaker, very tall and portly, dressed in the richest primness of the costume of his sect, meeting him, ordered him, in a very authoritative tone, to move off into the street. He apologized, expostulating that he was weary, the load was hard for him to carry, the sidewalk was much easier for him, and was amply wide enough for the few people then out. Without another word the sanctimonious old tyrant seized hold of the wheelbarrow, tipped it over into the street, and, pushing the boy aside, walked on. The blood of young Forrest boiled with indignation so that his brain seemed ready to burst. The ground was covered slightly with snow. He sank on his knees on it and tried in vain to pull up a paving-stone, to hurl at his tormentor. Weeping bitterly with baffled rage, he gathered his scattered load together and started on, cursing the cruel injustice to which he had been forced to submit. For years and years after, he said, the association of this outrage

was so envenomed in his memory that whenever he saw a Quaker he had to make an effort not instinctively to hate him. Such wrongs as this, inflicted on a sensitive child, often leave scars which rankle through life, permanently embittering and deforming the character. No generous nature but will take the warning, and considerately try to be ever just and kind to the young. In the bearing and effect of early experiences on subsequent character, it is profoundly and even wonderfully true that as the twig is bent the tree is inclined.

The kind friend and patron young Forrest had won by his exhibition at the Tivoli Garden did not forget him, but continued to give him good advice and encouragement. About a year afterwards he introduced him to the managers of the Walnut Street Theatre, Messrs. Wood and Warren. In consequence of this friendly intercession, and of his own promise, he was enabled to make his formal début, on the stage of the Walnut Street Theatre, on the evening of November 27th, 1820, in the character of Norval. His success was decisive. The leading Philadelphia newspaper said, "Of the part of Norval, we must say that it was as uncommon in the performance as it was extraordinary in just conception and exemption from the idea of artifice. We mean that the *sentiment* of the character obtained such full possession of the youth as to take away in appearance every consideration of an audience or a drama, and to give, as it were, the natural speaking of the shepherd boy suddenly revealed by instinct to be the son of Douglas. We were much surprised at the excellence of his elocution, his self-possession in speech and gesture, and a voice that, without straining, was of such volume and fine tenor as to carry every tone and articulation to the remotest corner of the theatre. We trust that this young gentleman will find the patronage to which his extraordinary ripeness of faculty and his modest deportment entitle him."

It is certainly interesting to find in this, the first criticism of the first regular appearance of Forrest, in the fifteenth year of his age, a distinct indication of his most prominent characteristics throughout his whole histrionic career, namely, his earnest realism, his noble voice, his accurate elocution, and his steady poise. The notice was from the pen of William Duane, of the "Aurora," then one of the ablest and most experienced editors in the

country, and afterwards Secretary of the Treasury under General Jackson.

The play was repeated December 2d. December 29th he sustained the part of Frederick, in Lovers' Vows; and January 6th, 1821, he assumed the rôle of Octavian, in The Mountaineers. On the last occasion, which was his benefit, the following notice was published in one of the morning papers: "The very promising youth, Master Forrest, who has appeared twice as Young Norval, and once as Frederick, is to perform Octavian this evening, and the profits of the house are for his benefit. We trust that this modest and promising youth will obtain the notice to which he is certainly well entitled from the lovers of the drama and of native genius."

Though the receipts from these his first four performances were not unusually large, the popular applause and the critical verdict were flattering. The results of the experiment confirmed his bent and fixed his resolution for life.

During this year, that is, before he was fifteen years old, he made another appearance on the stage, under circumstances which show the native boldness and resolution of his character. Without advice or assistance of any kind, he went alone to the proprietors of the Prune Street Theatre and asked them to let it to him on his own account for a single night. The proposition surprised them, but they admired the pluck of the boy so much that they granted his request. He engaged the company to support him, got his brother William to print the bills announcing him in the character of Richard the Third, drew a good house, and came off with a liberal quantity of applause and a small pecuniary gain.

It was at this date, when Forrest was in his fifteenth year, that he, who was destined to inspire so many poems, drew from the prophetic muse of an admirer the first verses ever composed on him. They were written by the Hon. Joseph R. Chandler, one of the most distinguished citizens of Philadelphia, and then editor of the "United States Gazette."

> "Turn we from State to view the mimic Stage,
> Which gives the form and pressure of the age.
> Each season brings its wonders, and each year
> Some unfledged buskins on our boards appear;

And Covent Garden sends us stage-sick trash
To gather laurels or to pocket cash.
A Phillipps comes to sing us Braham's airs,
And Wallack, Finn, and Maywood strut with theirs.
These sickly meteors dim our hemisphere,
While rare as comets Cookes and Keans appear:
These fopling twinklers, with their borrowed glare,
Will meet our censure when we cease to stare.
But the bright sun that gives our stage its rays
Still lights and warms us by its innate blaze.
We have a power to gild our drama's age,—
COOPER'S our Sun, his orbit is our stage.
Long may he shine, by sense and taste approved,
By fancy reverenced, and by genius loved!
And when retiring, mourned by every grace,
May FORREST rise to fill his envied place!
Dear child of genius! round thy youthful brow
Taste, wit, and beauty bind the laurel now.
No foreign praise thy native worth need claim;
No aid extrinsic heralds forth thy name;
No titled patron's power thy merit decked:—
The blood of Douglas will itself protect!"

The insight and the foresight indicated in the application of the last line to the yet undeveloped boy are remarkable, and will thrill every one who is familiar with the bearing and poise of the mature actor and man. For in him the massive majesty of pose, the slow weight of gesture, the fixedness of look, the ponderous gutturality and sweetness of articulative energy, all revealed an intensity and equilibrium of selfhood, a deep and vast power of personality, not often equalled. He was nothing if not independent and competent to his own protection.

The eminent English tragedian Cooper was at that time living in Philadelphia, in the intervals between his starring engagements. He was an actor of pronounced and signal merits, and of great professional authority, from his varied and long experience. Edwin had seen him in several of his chief parts, with docile quickness had caught important impressions from his performances, and was full of admiration for him. When, after his early successes, he had determined to become an actor himself, he longed for the sympathy and counsel of the illustrious veteran. Accordingly, armed with an introduction, he went to see the old king in his private state. He was received kindly, but with some loftiness. Cooper told him he must not trust to his raw triumphs

as an amateur, but must be willing to serve a regular apprenticeship to the art, and climb the ladder round by round, not trying to mount by great skips. The best men in every profession, he said, were those who had gone through all its experiences. The greatest lawyers he had known in England, he declared, had begun their career by sweeping out the law-office. Edwin, thinking his adviser meant him to stoop to the position of a supernumerary or call-boy, rather petulantly, but tellingly, answered, "When one knows how to read, he needs not to learn his letters." The old man was nettled by the pert reply, and the interview closed with coolness, though not, as has been reported, with anger or alienation. They were ever afterwards good friends, frequently meeting, and the veteran not only gave him much useful instruction, but also used his influence to secure for the novice an engagement in Boston. That there was no quarrel, no ingratitude, but, on the contrary, both a thankful appreciation and a generous return from the boyish aspirant and pupil, we shall, on a future page, cite the testimony of the old actor himself, amidst the decay and want of his last days.

The advice of Cooper was based on his own experience, and was sound. He himself, at fourteen, had engaged under Stephen Kemble. Kemble kept him a whole season without a single appearance. When he did appear, it was as a substitute for another, in the character of Malcolm, in Macbeth. He forgot his part, and was actually hissed off the stage. But he persevered, and slowly worked his way to the very summit of the profession. His advice to Edwin did not contemplate so low a descent as the boy inferred, but only that he should be modest and studious, begin in relatively humble parts, and grow by degrees. Forrest of his own accord, or perhaps in consequence of Cooper's words, really followed exactly this course a little later.

Although retaining his place in the store, his heart was given to the theatre, and the dearest exercises of his soul were devoted to the cultivation of the powers which, he hoped, would enable him at some future time to shine as he had seen others shine. Not only had Cooper presented a model to his admiring fancy. Edmund Kean also had electrified his senses and indelibly stamped his imagination. It was only two nights after his own benefit as Octavian that Kean began an engagement of twelve

nights in the same theatre. And of all in the crowds who waited on this peerless meteor of the stage, melted at the pathos of his genius, or trembled before the irresistible bursts of his power, in not one did the exhibition kindle such imperishable wonder and such idolatrous admiration as in the fond proud boy who was himself aspiring to become a great actor, and who drew from what he then saw a large share of the inspiration which afterwards urged him so high.

The nature of Edwin Forrest in his fifteenth year was remarkably developed and mature, especially when we consider the small advantages he had enjoyed. He was distinguished from most youths of his age by the intensity and tenacity of his passion and purpose, and by the vividness with which the objects of his thought were pictured in his mind. A consequence of these attributes was a strong personal magnetism, a power of attracting and deeply interesting susceptible natures with whom he came in contact.

He was not without touches of a poetic and sentimental vein, leading him sometimes to indulge in melancholy reveries. The following lines were composed by him at this time,—that is, in 1820. They were found among his posthumous papers, inscribed in his own hand, "Verses, or Doggerel, written in my Boyhood":

"Scenes of my childhood, hail!
All hail, beloved years
When Hope first spread life's sail,
Ere sorrow came, or tears.
Hail to the blissful hours
Of life's resplendent morn,
When all around was flowers,
And flowers without a thorn!

"Hail, guardians of my youth!
Hail their instructions given,
Showing the path of Truth,
The flowery way to heaven!
All hail the reverend place
Where first I lisped His name,
Where first my infant lips
God's praises did proclaim!
Inestimable precious scenes,
Now faded and all past,
Can you not fling one ray serene
To cheer me on at last?

Ah, no! Life's winter has set in,
And storms and tempests rise;
A chaos infinite of sin
Sweeps full before my eyes.

"This frail habiliment of soul
Must shortly cease to be,—
Some planet then my goal,—
Home for eternity.

Another document from his pen at about the same time will certainly interest readers who recall the circumstances of his situation then, and the facts of his subsequent career. It is the earliest application he ever made—and it was in vain—to the manager of a theatre for an engagement.

"PHILADA., Dec. 6, 1820.

"To Mr. JAMES H. CALDWELL, New Orleans.

"SIR,—Having understood you intend to open your theatre in the city of New Orleans some time during this month, I, by the advice of a number of friends, have taken the liberty of addressing you relative to an engagement. I am desirous of performing in your company for six or eight nights, in such parts as I shall name at the foot of this letter.

"I acted last season in Messrs. Warren and Wood's theatre for a few nights, and drew respectable and profitable houses, which is a difficult matter to do at this season in Philadelphia. For my capacity I refer you to the managers above named, or to Col. John Swift, of this city. Should you think it troublesome to write to these gentlemen on the subject, I will procure the necessary papers and forward them to you. If you conclude to receive me, I should like to hear on what terms, and so forth. Address care of John R. Baker and Son, 61 Race St., Philada.

"Yours truly,

"EDWIN FORREST.

"Characters:
Douglas,
Octavian,
Chamont,
Zanga,
Zaphna,
Tancred."

Among the first letters ever written by Edwin were three addressed to his brother William, who had given up working as a printer and become an actor, and was then absent on a professional engagement at Harrisburg, Reading, and York. When we remember that these letters were by a boy of sixteen, we shall not think them discreditable to him. They throw light on his character at that time, and show what he was doing. They also draw aside the veil of privacy a little, and give us some glimpses of the domestic drama of his home, the bereaved family industriously struggling to maintain itself, watched over perhaps from the other side by the still-conscious spirit of its departed head.

"PHILADELPHIA, 4th Feb'y, 1822.

"Mr. WM. FORREST, Harrisburg.

"DEAR BROTHER,—On Saturday evening last I performed Zaphna, in Mahomet, at Walnut Street Theatre, to a pretty good house, which would have been better had not Phillipps, the celebrated vocalist, been announced to appear on the Monday following. I played on the above evening better than ever I did before. After the murder of my father, repeated bravos rose from all quarters. Last scene, bravos again,—curtain fell amidst bravos kept up till the farce began and was forced to be suspended. Mr. Wood called me to his apartment, and told me to go on, they were calling for me. I informed him that I had never appeared before an audience in that manner, and begged him to go on for me. He did so, and asked the audience what was their pleasure. Engagement! engagement! from every side. Mr. Wood said he had heard nothing to the contrary; he was happy that Master Forrest had pleased the audience, and if they wished it he should appear again. The people testified their approbation, and the farce was suffered to proceed in peace.

"I expect to appear with Mr. Phillipps this or next week. I anticipate that they will hiss him when he appears to-night. More of this by-and-by. Please write as early as possible, and let me know how you make out. We are well, with the exception of myself. I have a severe cold. I remain

"Your affectionate brother,

"EDWIN FORREST.

"P.S.—Heavy snow falling."

"PHILADELPHIA, 15th April, 1822.

"Mr. WILLIAM FORREST, Reading.

"DEAR BROTHER,—I received your esteemed favor of the 13th instant, and carefully noticed its contents. My brother, you complain of my not writing to you since your arrival in Reading. The reason is this. A gentleman called at the house and informed me that you would return to the city on Saturday last. Lorman and I were on the point of coming up to you, but affairs interfered.

"Lorman called on Johnson, according to your request. He informs him that you can get work at the printing business without any difficulty, the printers being very busy at present in this city. Therefore I would advise you to quit the unfair Williams as early as possible. If you fail in getting a situation at your trade, Stanislas will engage you on your arrival to act in a good line of business. Therefore you have a double advantage. The Walnut Street Theatre closes for the season on Friday next with the new comedy of the Spy, written by a young gentleman of New York. To-morrow evening I perform Richard Third for my own benefit. Joel Barr called here a week or ten days after he had been in town, to tell us you were well. Leave that pander of a manager directly; do not stay another moment with him, is the advice of your affectionate brother,

"EDWIN.

"P.S.—Henrietta says she is sorry you have two and a half shirts, but that is better than she expected.

"Billy McCorkle says $12 ought to have been an object to you. Ah, he says, it was a bad day's work when you left him!

"We expect you by the return stage. So pack up your tatters and follow the drum.

"E. F."

"PHILADELPHIA, 1st June, 1822.

"Mr. WILLIAM FORREST, York, Pa.

"DEAR BROTHER,—I take this opportunity of addressing myself to you and asking your pardon for my ungrounded belief that you had been guilty of misusing my letters. I have every reason now to believe that Mrs. Allen must have invented some lie and told it to Stanislas.

"I have the pleasure of informing you that your friend Sam

Barr is married. Therefore wish him joy; for you know a man entering into such a state stands in need of the good wishes of his friends. I am sorry to relate that Sinclair is dead.

"'There would have been a time for such a word.'

"The actors are not undoing themselves at Tivoli. A young gentleman by the name of Ondes makes his appearance there this evening in the character of Octavian. Mrs. Riddle has left the company.

"I leave the firm in Race Street this day. When you can spare from your salary the sum of $5, I wish you would send it to me, as I at present stand in much need, and ere long I will transmit it to you again. We are all well, and hope that this will find you so. Write as early as possible; in expectation whereof I remain

"Yours, affectionately,

"EDWIN F.

"P.S.—Mother is longing for your return, and I hope it will not be long ere our wishes are fulfilled."

For the next two months he was in earnest training, developing the muscles of his body and the faculties of his mind, practising athletics and studying rôles, looking out meanwhile for some regular engagement. The following letter speaks for itself:

"PHILADELPHIA, 7th Sept., 1822.

"JAMES HEWITT, Esq., Boston.

"SIR,—Having understood from Mr. Utt that you were about to form a company of actors to go to Charleston, I have, by the advice of the above-named gentleman, written to know whether you would afford me an engagement in your concern or not, I having a desire to visit the aforesaid city. As you must already be acquainted with the line of business I have supported in Messrs. Wood and Warren's Theatre, it is useless to say anything farther on that head, referring you to Mr. Utt, Messrs. Wood and Warren, John Swift, Esq., of Philadelphia, or to Mr. Thomas A. Cooper: the latter gentleman having procured me an engagement in Mr. Dickson's theatre, Boston, which I declined, thinking it better to be more remote, for some years at least, from the principal cities.

"If, therefore, you have any idea of giving me a situation in a respectable line, juvenile business, you will hear farther from me by addressing a line to 77 Cedar Street, Philadelphia.

"Your most obedient servant,

"(In haste.) EDWIN FORREST.

"P.S.—I should be pleased to learn your resolve as early as possible, so that in case you decline my services I may be enabled elsewhere to make arrangements."

This letter, like the one he had two years before addressed to Caldwell, was fruitless. But his mind was firmly made up that he would persevere until his efforts were successful. And, a few days later, the opportunity he sought presented itself, and he left home to enter in earnest on a regular apprenticeship to the vocation he had chosen.

Here, for a little space, we drop the thread of personal narrative for the purpose of introducing a sketch of the origin and significance of the dramatic art. As the subject of this biography is to be an actor, his character to be shaped by the peculiar influences of the theatrical profession, his career and fame to be permanently associated with the history of that profession in America, an exposition of the origin and nature of the drama, of its different forms and applications, and of its personal uses, will bring the reader to the succeeding chapters with a fuller appreciation of their various topics, and give him some data for estimating the place which the art of acting has held, now holds, and is destined hereafter to hold, in the experience of mankind.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL ORIGIN, VARIETY, AND PERSONAL USES OF THE DRAMATIC ART.

Any one who so analyzes the Dramatic Art as to see what its basis, contents, and uses are, will be astonished to find what a deep and wide feature it is in human nature, and how extensive and important a part it plays in human life. The study of the great spectacle of human existence as a whole, from the point of view of the Stage, in the light of dramatic usages and imagery, imparts to it a keener, more diversified, more comprehensive interest and instructiveness than it can receive in any other way. The habit of thus seeing people and things group themselves in pictures, of looking on scenes and acts in their relationship as a whole, of reading character and getting at states of mind and plucking out personal secrets by an intuitive and cultivated art of interpreting the signs consciously or unconsciously given, is spontaneous in men of the highest artistic genius, like Homer, Dante, Shakspeare, and Goethe. And it lends a marvellous charm and piquancy to their experience of the world, enchanting every object with active significance, color, and mystery.

Thus the Theatre, technically so called, is but one of the lesser spheres of the dramatic art. The tragedies and comedies coldly elaborated there are often tame and poor to those enacted with the flaming passions of life itself in parlors and kitchens, in palace and hut and street. Every one of us is essentially an actor, the setting of his performance furnished independently of his will wherever he goes, all his schemes included and borne on in a divine plan deeper than he dreams. Our own organism is the primary theatre, the proscenia of brain and heart teeming with dramas which link our being and destiny with those of all other actors from the beginning to the end of the world. Every spot in which man meets his fellow-men is a secondary theatre, arrayed with its scenery of circumstances, where each has his

rôle and all the characters and parts interplay upon one another with mixtures of truth and deceit, skill and awkwardness, aspiration and despair. One of the chief differences is that some get behind the scenes and sharply understand a little of what is going on, while most take their parts blindly, ignorant of what either themselves or others are about, alternately before the foot-lights and back of the drop. And, meanwhile, what is the blue, glittering wilderness of infinitude itself but the theatre fitted up by God, with its doors of birth and death and its curtains of day and night, for the training of the total company of living creatures with which He has stocked it, from animalcule to archangel? The Manager has assigned in the evolution of the universal plot their just rôles to all the performers, with incessant transmigrations of drudge and star, lackey and hero, sultan and beggar, while the years move on and the generations pass and return, the whole space of the stage being crowded as thickly with shifting masks and disguises as a sunbeam is with motes.

All place being thus theatrical, and all conscious existence thus having something dramatic, it is quite obvious how inadequate must be their appreciation of the art of acting who recognize its offices only in the play-house. The play-house is merely the scene of its purposed and deliberate *exhibition* as a professional art. In its different kinds, with its different degrees of consciousness and complexity, as a matter of instinct and culture it is *practised* everywhere. Freeing our minds from prejudices on the one side, and from indifference on the other, let us, then, approach the subject with an earnest effort to learn the truth and to see what its lessons are.

The history of the drama, in the usual accounts given of it, is traced back to Thespis, Susarion, and others, in Greece, about six centuries before Christ. But this has reference only to the most detached and consummate form of the art. In order really to understand its derivative basis, its ingredients, its numerous applications and the moral rank and value of its several uses, we must go much farther back, and study its gradual ascent. We must, indeed, not only go beyond the polished states of civilization, but even beyond the first appearance of man himself on the scene of this world. For the rudiments of the dramatic art, the simple germs afterwards combined and developed in human

nature with higher additions, are manifested in the lower animals. The naked foundations, the raw materials, of the art of acting are shown in all gregarious creatures, and portions of them even in solitary creatures. They are the crude instincts of intelligence, imagination, and sympathy. Creatures who are made alike have the same inner states of consciousness when they are under the same outer conditions. They also reveal these inner states by the same outer signs, namely, attitudes, movements, colors, cries, nervous relaxations or contractions. Seeing in another creature the signals of a certain state which has always in their own experience been the accompaniment and cause of these same signals, they interpret the signals accordingly, and enter into the same state themselves by sympathy, the signals by a reversal of impulse reacting to cause the state which they primarily denoted. Thus panics spread through a swarm of birds, an army of wild horses, or a flock of sheep. Thus the leader of a herd of buffaloes coming on the track of hunters or in sight of a grizzly bear is terrified by the danger and starts off on a run in another direction. The stiffened tail, erected ears, glaring eyes, expanded nostrils, impetuous plunge, communicate the instinctive intelligence and feeling through these signs from the nearest members of the herd to those farther off, with extreme rapidity, and soon the entire multitude is in one sympathetic state of alarm and flight. The perception of danger by the leader awakened the feeling of fear and led to the movement of escape. Those who had not these states of themselves caught their signs and assumed their substance from the one who had. Thus all are reinforced and saved by one.

There are animals and insects which on being touched, or being approached by a superior enemy, instantly assume the attitude and appearance of death. They recognize their peril, and seek to elude notice by a motionless condition which simulates death. They thus pretend to be other than they are, for the purpose of preserving the power to remain what they are. The ruby-throated humming-bird of Canada, if captured, feigns death by shutting its eyes and keeping quite still, then making a vigorous effort to escape. Some birds by false pretences of agitation lure the trapper away from the neighborhood of their nest. Cats constantly feign sleep to further their design of catching birds or

mice. This shows not only a dramatic gift, but also a clear purpose in the use of it.

This *playing 'possum* is a dramatic artifice very prevalent even in the lower regions of the animal kingdom. If it be thought that a bug cannot possibly know so much, the reply is, Perhaps the bug itself does not, but the presence of God, the creative and guardian Spirit of nature, the collective experience of the total ancestry of the bug organized in its nervous system, does know it; and it is this automatic reason that plays the cunning game. A bear has been known to frequent the bank of a stream where fishes were wont to come to the surface and feed on the falling fruit of an overhanging tree, to splash the water with his paw in imitation of the dropping fruit, and when the fish appeared, seize and devour it! This neat little drama implies on the part of the bear an imaginative conception of the different personages and scenes in the situation, in advance, and then a deliberate representation of his ideas in action. It would be the same thing as human art if the bear could of its own impulse repeat the whole serial action under other circumstances, as, for example, before a group of bears off in the woods. This he cannot do; and thus is the animal drama differenced from the human drama, instinct separated from art.

A great many animals are known to imitate the cries or motions of the creatures they prey on, in order to allure them within seizing-distance. For the sake of gaining some end they pretend to be what they are not, and to entertain feelings and designs quite different from their real ones. Certainly this is to be a hypocrite, an actor, in the deepest sense of guile. The mocking-bird has the faculty of mimicking the notes of all kinds of birds with marvellous accuracy and ease. It takes great pleasure in practising the gift, calling various kinds of timid songsters around it, and then with a malicious delight pouring on their ears the screams of their enemies and scattering them in the wildest terror. By this exercise of the dramatic art the mocking-bird refreshes, varies, magnifies, the play of its own life. In like manner, and with the same result, kittens, dogs, lions, play games with one another, represent mimic battles, pretend to be angry, to strike and bite, doing it all in a gentle manner, softened down from the deadly earnestness of reality.

The aim and use of those crude elements or germs of the drama which appear in the lower animal world would seem, therefore, to be the enabling them to escape their pursuers, to seize their prey, to vary and enlarge their lives by that gregarious interchange and consolidation which is a mutual giving and taking of inner states through outer signs. It is transmitted instinct, fitted to its ends and acting within fixed limits, dependent for the most part on outward stimuli.

Mounting from animals to men, we discover the earliest developments of the dramatic art among the rudest tribes of savages. The prevalence and exercise of the faculty of dramatization among the principal tribes of barbarians in all parts of the world are equally striking and extensive. It is one of the most prized and powerful portions of their experience, and one of the first to impress the travellers who visit them. It has three distinct provinces. The first is their own actual lives, whose most exciting incidents, most salient features, they repeat in mimic representation. Dressed in appropriate costumes, they celebrate with counterfeit performances the Planting Festival, the Harvest Festival, and other important events connected with the phenomena of the year. They also dramatize with intense vividness and vigor the experience of war,—the following of the trail of the enemy, the ambush, the surprise, the struggle, the scalping of the slain, the burning of the village, the gathering of the booty, the return home, and the triumphant reception. This is not confined to the North American Indians. The Dyaks of Borneo, the New Zealanders, the Patagonians, the Khonds of Asia, the Negroes of Africa, and scores of other peoples, have similar rites, besides numerous additional ones less distinctively dramatic, covering the ceremonies of hunting, fishing, marriage, birth, and death.

The second department of the drama among barbarians is their impersonations of animals, their picturesque and terrible representation of the passions and habits of reptiles, birds, and beasts. Morgan, in his History of the Iroquois, gives a list of some forty dances in which they acted out to the life stories based on their own experience and on that of the creatures beneath them. But we owe to Catlin some of the most graphic descriptions of the drama among the North American savages.

In the Eagle Dance, the braves dress themselves as eagles, in plumes, feathers, beaks, talons; and they shriek, whistle, sail, swoop, in exact imitation of them. In the Wolf Dance, they go on all-fours, yelp, snarl, bark, and fill up the wolfish programme to the very letter. In the Buffalo Dance, they each wear a buffalo mask, consisting of the face, horns, and skin of a buffalo, and mimic, in ludicrous burlesque, the sounds and motions of that unwieldy creature. And so with bears, foxes, beavers, hawks, and the rest of the fauna most familiar to them. In these performances they reproduce with frenzied truth and force the most ferocious and deadly traits of their prototypes, and often, among the savages of Fiji and South Africa, the drama ends half drowned in blood. In Dahomey, where the Serpent is worshipped, the votary crawls on his belly as a snake and licks the dust before his idol, and sometimes becomes crazy with the permanent possession of his part. The barbaric mind finds intense excitement and enjoyment in these plays, hideous as they seem to us. They break up the weary monotony of his life, and introduce the relish of games and novelty and variety. They give him, what he so greatly craves, mental amusement with physical passion and exertion. They are his almost only antidote for the bane of stagnation.

On the other hand, great evils result from them. They never work upward to reflect higher forms of character and life for redemptive imitation, but downward, in the impersonating of creatures whose inferiority either inflames the boastful and reckless self-complacency of the actors, or else by its reflex influences takes possession of their consciousness and animalizes them, degrading them to the level of the brutes they portray. Secondly, the reception of the idea of the beast, snake or vulture which they represent, their furious mimicry of it, the spasmodic, rhythmical, long-continued movements they make in accordance with it, tend to subject the brain to the automatic spinal and ganglionic centres below, and thus furnish the conditions and initiate the stages of all sorts of insanity. Much of the persistent degradation and ferocity of the barbaric world is to be traced to this cause.

Nor is this the only evil; for, in the third place, when the savage mind, after such a training, affects to penetrate the invisi-

ble world and come back to report and portray the supernatural beings who exercise authority there, it naturally takes its impulsive cue, its ideal stamp, from the nervous centres under the inspiration of which it acts. Those centres being possessed by the influences of serpents, wolves, lust, hate, and murder, of course the spirits and gods reflected will be fiends, incongruous mixtures of beast and man, devilish monsters. Then the worship of these reacts to deepen the besotted superstition and terror, the nightmare carnival of the brain, out of which it originally sprang. And so the process goes on, in a doomed circle of hopelessness. The time and faculty devoted by the soothsayers and medicine-men who compose the priestly caste in savagedom to the tricking out of their devil-gods and their mummery of magic,—the time and faculty given by their followers to the enactment of their obsessed ritual,—if directed to the creation and imitative reproduction of superior types of human character and experience, would soon lift them out of the barbaric state in which they have so long grovelled. And it is a very impressive fact that every instance revealed in history of a savage people rising into civilization is accompanied by the tradition of some illustrious stranger from afar, or some divinely-inspired genius emerging among themselves, who has originated the rôle of a new style of man, thrown it out before them for dramatic assimilation, and so impressed it on them as to secure its general copying among them. This has, thus far in history, been the divine plan for lifting the multitude: the appearance of a single inspired superior whose characteristics the inferiors look up to with loving reverence and put on for the transformation of their own personalities into the likeness of his. That is the dynamic essence of Christianity itself.

The next step in this survey of the psychological history of the dramatic art whereby we are essaying to unfold its purport and its final definition, leads us from barbaric life to the private homes of the most cultivated classes of civilized society. The higher we go in the scale of social wealth and rank, the larger provisions we shall find made for gratifying the dramatic instincts of children, till we come to the nursery of the baby prince, who has his miniature parks of cannon and whole regiments of lead soldiers, and the baby princess, who has a constant succession of dolls of

all grades, costumes, and ages. The little warrior animates his soldiers and their officers with such ideas and passions as he has in himself or as he can get glimpses of from his elders or from books, creates rôles for them, and puts them through their paces and fortunes with such variety and succession as he can contrive. And so his nursery is a theatre, and he is at once author, manager, actors, supernumeraries, spectators, and all. Likewise the young girl dresses up her dolls, takes them to church, to balls, undresses them, puts them to sleep, weds them, celebrates their funeral, in a word, transfuses all her own life, real and imaginative, into them, and so reactingly multiplies herself and her experience, and peoples the otherwise tedious vacancy of childhood with vital and passionate processions, pathetically prefiguring all the tragedy and comedy that are actually to follow. A Bengal newspaper, giving an account of a curious marriage-procession through the streets of Dacca, says, "In Indian households dolls play a far more important part than they do in England, for all the perfection to which we have attained in the art of making, clothing, and lodging them. Indian dolls are not remarkable for beauty or close resemblance to human models; but in bedecking them no expense is spared. They have a room to themselves, and seem to enjoy as much attention as live children do elsewhere. Feasts and garden-parties are given in their honor. The death of a doll involves a great show of mourning, and the marriage of one is a public event. In the present instance two dolls belonging to the daughters of the wealthiest Hindus in Dacca were led out at the head of a solemn procession, to the delight of the bystanders. After the wedding ceremony the parents of the girls who had thus disposed of their puppets laid out a few thousand rupees in feasting their friends and caste-folk, as well as the neighboring poor."

As children grow older and become school-boys and school-girls, this faculty and impulse do not cease to act, but, developed still further, instead of imparting fancied life and action to inanimate toys, lead them to imitative performances of their own, causing them to group themselves together for the representation of games, and of the historic scenes, social events, or fictitious stories which have most impressed and pleased their imaginations.

The point of interest demanding attention at this stage of our

inquiry is how to discriminate clearly between the drama of the savage and the drama of the child. The dramatization of the savage is mimetic, a putting on from without of the disguise, the postures, sounds, motions, of the animal he impersonates. He imitates the outer signs of the animal; and these often in return produce in him the corresponding states of consciousness. But the dramatization of the child is creative, a projection from within of his own thoughts and emotions into the counterfeit toys he personifies, and a consequent heightening of his own sense of life by an imagination of its being imparted and sympathetically taken up and shared. With the barbarian the primary movement of action is from without inward; with the child it is from within outward. There it is the interpretative assumption by the actor of the signs of states in another; here it is the direct transference by sympathetic imagination of the states of the actor to another. That is the raw drama of the senses, this the initial drama of the soul.

We must pause here, before passing to the next head, to make a brief exposition of another department and application of the dramatic power of man, a department intermediate between the examples already given and those which are to come. Its peculiarity is that it combines in one, with certain original features of its own, the barbaric and the childish drama. The creation of Fables is the strongest delight of the dramatizing literary faculty in its first movements. Its workings are to be traced in the ingenuous oral treasures preserved among tribes who have no written language, as well as in the most beloved vernacular writings current among the populace in civilized countries. Fables are short compositions designed to teach moral truths, or to impress moral truisms, by representing beasts, birds, reptiles, insects, trees, flowers, or other objects, as endowed with the faculties of men, retaining their own forms but acting and talking as men, exemplifying the virtues and vices of men in characteristic deeds, followed by their proper consequences. In the degrading barbarian drama the actors admit into themselves the lower creatures whom they represent, putting on the skins, movements, cries, of the crocodiles, hyenas, or boa-constrictors the ideas of whom they take into their brains. In the naïve child drama the little performers project the ideas of themselves into the dolls

and toys they personify and move. But in the fable drama these two processes are joined, with a mere inversion of the subjects of the first; for in fables the actors, in place of being, as in the plays of savages, the assumed souls of animals and the disguised bodies of men, are the disguised souls of men in the assumed forms and costumes of animals. The one is an actual representation of animals by men for free sport; the other is an imaginary representation of men by animals for the inculcation of lessons, as, for example, in the well-known instance of the Wolf and the Lamb. The author of a fable puts his own human nature into the humbler creatures whom he dramatizes, with a deliberate conscious thought, a creative exercise of the reflective faculty at the second remove, quite unlike the instinctive and half-believing action of the child who straddles a stick pretending that it is a horse. He has a clear didactic purpose in addition to the sportive impulse of fancy. This picturing of human nature and its experiences in the living framework of the lower world yields the keenest pleasure to all who have not outgrown it; and no one ought ever to outgrow it. He outgrows it only by the gradual hardening of his heart and fancy, the immovable stolidity of his faculties in their fixed ruts and crusts. It is the favorite literature of the childhood of the world. It is filled with quaint wisdom, raciness, and droll burlesque, as is abundantly to be seen in the traditions of the Hottentots, the Esquimaux, the Africans, and other barbaric nations. And in the classic compositions of Pilpai the Persian, Lokman the Arab, Æsop the Greek, Phædrus the Roman, La Fontaine the Frenchman, and other masters, it constitutes, with its innocent gayety, its malicious mischief, its delicious wit and humor, its cutting satire and caricature, one of the most exquisite portions of cosmopolitan literature.

Hardly any other conception has given the people so much pleasure as that Beast-Epic, or picture of human life in the vizards and scenery of animal life, which, under the title of "Reynard the Fox," circulated through Europe for centuries,—a sort of secular and democratic Bible, read in palaces, quoted in universities, thumbed by toilsmen, delighted in by all, old and young, high and low, learned and illiterate. There the society and life of the Middle Age are reflected with grotesque truth and mirth, grim irony, sardonic grins, comic insight, laughter

and tragedy, not without many touches of poetry and prophecy. There are Noble the Lion, Isegrim the Wolf, Reynard the Fox, Chanticleer the Cock, Bruin the Bear, Lampe the Hare, Hinze the Cat, and the rest, each one representing enigmatically some class or order in the human life of the romantic but cruel Feudal World. The poet, with a sly joy, unfolds his pictures of wolves tonsured as monks, foxes travelling as pilgrims to shrines and to Rome, cocks pleading as lawyers at the judgment-bar. He asserts the moral standard of the plebeian instincts against the conventional ecclesiastic and civil codes, and rectifies his own wrongs as without rank, power, or wealth, but gifted with genius and spirit, against the kings, barons, priests, and soldiers, by portraying the uniform final success of the reckless, good-for-nothing, but inexhaustibly bright, shifty, and fascinating Reynard. The representative types of the strong, cruel, stupid men of prerogative and routine are made to serve as foils for the scholar and actor, with his spiritual flexibility, elusive swiftness of resource, inner detachment and readiness.

The attractiveness of fables is fourfold. First, the charm of all exercises of the dramatic art, namely, the incessant playing of human nature with its elementary experiences in and out of all sorts of masks and disguises of changing persons and situations. Second, the congruous mixture in them of the most extravagant impossibilities and absurdities with the plainest facts and truths; the union of sober realities of reason and nature with incredible forms, giving fresh shocks of wit and humor. Third, the constant sense of superiority and consequent elated complacency felt by the human auditor or reader over the animal impersonators of his nature, with the ludicrous contrasts and suggestions they awaken at every turn. Fourth, the interest and authority of the moral lessons, truisms though these may be, which they so vividly bring out.

One cannot refrain from adding, in this connection, that there is a further form of the dramatic inhabitation of our humbler brethren the brutes, by kind and generous men, an example newly offered to notice by the officers and friends of our Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. These gentlemen, by a divine extension of their sympathy, quite in the spirit of the blessed Master who in his parables immortalized the hen, the sparrow,

the raven, the ox, and the ass, transport themselves into the situation of the poor dumb creatures who are so often abused, feel and speak for them, and try to remedy their wrongs and to secure them their rights. They are spreading abroad a disposition and habit of kindness which will not stop with the first field of its application, but will extend to include in a finer and vaster embrace the whole world of childhood, and all the weak, degraded, and suffering classes of men. This development of sympathy is one of surprising beauty and promise. It tends to do for us what the doctrine of the transmigration of souls has done for the Hindoos,—affiliate us with the entire series of living beings in tender sentiment and mystery, as members of one family, under one law of destiny. It will indeed redeem the whole world of humanity if it shall be applied consistently to all as it was expressed by the famous Rarey in the practical principle he applied to the taming of unruly horses, namely: Free them from the spirit of opposition, and fill them with the spirit of obedient trust, by showing them how groundless is fear and how futile is resistance. The truth of God in the love of men will one day end crime, cruelty, terror, and misery. O blessed vision, how far away art thou?

The dramatic art, based on the science of human nature in the revelation of its inner states through outer signs, is the exercise of that power whereby man can indefinitely multiply his personality and life, by identifying himself with others, or others with himself, by divesting himself of himself and entering into the characters, situations, and experiences of those whom he beholds or reads of or creatively imagines. This definition elevates the art, in its pure practice, high above the reach of cavil; for its central principle is the essence of that disinterested sympathy and vicarious atonement whose culmination on Calvary have deified the Christ.

Let us trace a little the rise and nature of this power from a point of view somewhat different from the one in which we have already considered it.

The life of a peach-tree, a rose-bush, or a squash-vine is rigidly determined for it in advance by the seed from which it springs and the soil and climate in which it grows. Its life is simply the sum of actions and reactions between the forces in

itself and the forces in its environment; and this sum of dynamic relations is fixed fatally by its organic structure. To a degree the same is true of the life of a weasel, a pig, a horse, or an eagle; but this with two modifications, two elements of greatening freedom and variety. First, in connection with the consciousness and the power of locomotion which distinguish the animal from the vegetable, it can change its environment, from cliff to cave, from village to desert, from field to shore, from hill to valley, or from a temperate zone to a tropical, thus securing a large mass of changes in its surrounding conditions, resulting in a correspondent diversity or increase in that sum of actions and reactions which composes its life. Second, the gregarious nature of animals enables them likewise, to some extent, to supplement one another, to exchange states of consciousness and unite their experience. Crows hold consultations and caw with mutual intelligibility. A flock of wild geese understand the honk of their leader, and obey every signal perfectly. Bees converse, build, hunt, wage war, and carry on their little monarchical republic with amazing cunning and consent.

But this associative alteration, enhancement, and interchange of life receive an almost incredible development when we ascend to man. His nature and destiny too, the fact that he is a man, not a tree or a brute or an angel or a god, are determined for him by his parentage. This hereditary descent decides his general character and status, and also many details of special faculty and tendency. But in him all this coexists with an immense freedom and power of foreign assimilation. He can change and modify the conditions of his habitat in a thousand particulars where the lower animals can do so in one. By free education, drill, and habit, he can likewise indefinitely modify his reactions on the same outer conditions. But far above all this in rank and reach is his ability to *perfect his character by the characters of others*, to make the most direct and copious levying on the experiences of his fellow-men. He has not only the organic inheritance of his ancestry and the traditional treasure of his country and people to work with, but, furthermore, in history, science, and literature he has the keys to the conscious wealth of all men in all lands and times.

The outward universe in which we live is one and the same in

common to all men. But the inner representation of this, the sum of all that he has experienced and knows of it, is different with every man. Now, it is with the revelation, the discovery, seizure, and exhibition of this peculiar inner or ideal world of each individual that the dramatic art in its practice in actual life is concerned. The business of most persons seems to be rather to conceal and hold back, to falsify and distort their inner states, than to reveal and impart them. Their arts are disguise, imposture, and deception, rather than sincerity, sympathy, and frankness. But the practical science of the drama puts all the secrets in our power, and enables us to add to our own inner world or conscious personal kosmos the related inner worlds of others, almost without hindrance or limit.

A philosopher like Hegel, a scientist like Humboldt, a poet like Rückert, deeply read in all literatures and trained to the facile reproduction of every mode of thought and action, traverses all races and ages, deciphering their symbols, reading their passions, royally reaping their experimental conquests, thus virtually enlarging his own soul to the dimensions of collective humanity and enriching himself with its accumulated possessions. The first condition of truly profound and vital acting is to have the knowledge, the liberty, the spiritual energy and skill, to solve this inner side of the problem by reconstructing in the mind and heart the modes of character, passion, and conduct which are to be represented. They must be mastered and made one's own before they can be intelligently exhibited. It is the part of a charlatan to content himself with merely detecting and imitating the outer signs. He is potentially the richest and freest man who is most capable of assuming and subsidizing all other men. He is virtually the king and owner of the world, though without crown or sceptre, while many a titular king has nothing but these external insignia. The greatest actor is the one who is the most perfect master of all the signs of the inner states of men, and can in his own person exhibit those signs with the most vivid power. He must have, to be completely equipped for his work, a mind and a body whose parallel faculties and organs are energetic and harmonic, every muscle of the one so liberated and elastic, every power of the other so freed and connected, that they can act either singly or in varied combination with others

or with the whole, with easy precision and vigor. The absence of prejudices and strictures, contracting ignorance and hate, and the presence of disinterested wisdom and openness, a trained intuitive sensibility, will put all states of all souls in his possession by spontaneous interpretation of their signals. Such an actor, perfected in his own being and crowned with the trophies of human culture in every department, is fitted to pass through all the grades and ranges of society, reflecting everything, subjected to nothing, the sovereign of mankind, the top of the world.

And now we are prepared to advance to the heart of our theme and show the place of the drama in its full development in adult civilized society, where all sorts of acting are not only diffused through the daily life of the community, but also separated in a distinct profession and supplied with a brilliant home. The drama, in its finished literary and histrionic sense, is seen when a story, instead of being merely described in forms, words, or colors, —as by sculpture, narrative, and painting,—is exhibited by fit personages in living action with all the appropriate accessories of looks, attitudes, tones, articulations, gestures, and deeds. The end of this imitative, reproductive, and creative exhibition is, as has already been said, to enable the spectator to transpose himself out of himself into others, assimilating them to himself or himself to them, thus unlimitedly exchanging his personality and its conscious contents. In this sense the dramatic faculty is universal, and its exercise, in an unsystematic way, incessant. What other people do in a bungling and piecemeal manner, without clear purpose or method, the professional actor does with full consciousness and system, and exhibits for the pleasure and edification of the observers. Everybody, from infancy to old age, with such pliancy of fancy, resources of reason, wealth of sympathy, as he can command, is always observing other people, studying, judging, approving, copying, or condemning and avoiding. All that is wanting to regulate and complete the art is, as Schlegel has said, to draw the mimic elements and fragments clear off from real life, and confront real life with them collectively in one mass. This is the sphere and office of the Theatre, whose very business it is to hold up the mirror to nature and humanity, that all styles of character and conduct may be seen in their proper quality and their true rank, teaching the spectators

what to despise, what to admire, what to shun, what to imitate or reproduce for the perfecting of their own characters and conduct.

There are in the exhibited drama three provinces or directions, the lower, the intermediate, and the higher, or Comedy, Melodrama, and Tragedy. In the lower drama, inferior types of men and manners are exhibited for the various purposes of amusement, ridicule, satire, correction. The direction of the moral and social faculties of the spectators towards the persons and actions they contemplate is downward from their own or the social mental standards of virtue, propriety, and grace to the real exemplifications before them, the descending movement which accompanies their perception of the incongruity awakening laughter or tendencies to laughter, scorn or tendencies to scorn, with a reflex of complacency in themselves. Comedy teaches, so far as it ventures to teach at all and does not content itself with mere entertainment, by the principle of opposition and contrast, showing what *not* to do and how *not* to do it, suggesting grace by awkwardness, hinting refinement by vulgarity, setting off beauty and dignity by ugliness and triviality. This, as every one must see, is a varied, effective, and fruitful mode of direct instruction as well as of indirect and unpurposed educational moulding. No one can well be thoroughly familiar with the genteel comedy of the theatres and remain a boor. Such a familiarity is of itself a sort of social education.

In the higher drama, or Tragedy, the superior social types, lords, ladies, geniuses, kings, and the nobler styles of character, heroes, martyrs, saints, are represented, to awaken admiration and reverence, to stir emulous and aspiring desires. Pity, love, and awe, the profoundest passions and capacities of the soul, are moved and expanded. The mysteries of fate and providence are shadowed forth, and the most insoluble problems of morality and religion indirectly agitated. Transcendent degrees of power, virtue, success, and glory, or failure and suffering, are indicated; and all our upward-looking faculties are put on the stretch, with the result of assimilating more or less of the forms of being and experience on which they sympathizingly gaze aloft. Here we are taught, sometimes with a distinct aim, oftener by an unpurposed, contagious kindling of suggested thought and feeling,

innumerable lessons pertaining to human nature and experience, the varieties of character and conduct, the limits and retributions of virtue and vice, the extremes of hope and despair, the portentous question of death, the omnipresent laws of God. How much one shall be affected and changed, inspired and aided, by all this, depends on his docility and earnestness in front of it, his plasticity under it. But it is plain that it can scarcely be repeated and continued without important effects on all who are not dolts.

The intermediate, or Melodrama, mixed of the other two and presented on the ever-varying level between comic lowness and tragic height, brings forward a medley of characters, greater and lesser, good, bad, and indifferent, portraying life not truly as it is in fact, but exaggeratedly, in heterogeneous combination, so set off in extravagant relief and depression, emphasis of lights and shades, as to give it a more than natural attraction for the senses. Without taxing any faculties in the audience, it piques the curiosity of all by turns, and exercises and refreshes them with its rapid changes and its glaring effects, which provide strong sensations yet with small exaction on the mind. Any explicit instruction it contains is incidental, since its real business is to serve as a spiritual alterative directed to the soul through the senses, to beguile heavy thoughts and cares, to entertain and rest weary faculties with fresh objects, and fill idle hours with pleasurable amusement. All this is certainly legitimate, needed, and useful, although it may be abused by the employment of illegitimate means, and thus perverted into an injury. But every good thing is likewise capable of perversion, and ought to be judged by its true intent, not by its aberrations.

Furthermore, it is to be said—and it is an important truth which should in no wise be overlooked—that even when the play is petty and worthless in plot, full of absurdities as many of our gaudy modern pantomimes and spectacles are, and pernicious in its exhibitions of nudity, impure postures, and prurient accessories,—even then a twofold good may be derived from the show, in addition to the mere recreative diversion and pleasure yielded. First, the sight of the superb power, grace, and skill of the trained performers, disciplined and perfected to the highest point of energy, self-possession, and easy and joyous readiness for the execution of their functions, is a charming and edifying

sight. It is the display of models of human nature developed to an extreme degree of strength, beauty, and flexibility,—a display which tends to mould the eyes of the spectators, and through their eyes to affect their souls and to exert educational influence on future generations. Every spectator should be kindled by the sight to secure for himself, for the highest fulfilment of life under the eyes of God, the exemplary development which these performers have so laboriously won for the mere purpose of exhibition and pay. The sacrifice and toil they have devoted for the sake of applause, should we not be willing to devote for the sake of entering on our full heritage in the universe?

Second, the melodrama, by its artistic groupings, colors, and movements, its scenic processions, its magic pictures, its orderly evolution of romantic adventures, the multiform interplaying of the characters and fortunes of its actors upon one another, draws our attention from ourselves, enlists our feelings in the fates of others, and thus exercising our faculties, disciplines, purifies, and emancipates them, making them readier and more competent for whatever exigencies we may be called on to meet. This great good and use of the dramatic art, its moral essence, is afforded to the profiting beholder by almost every theatrical representation, namely, that, in showing life concentrated and intensified, it holds up for imitation the instructive spectacle, in its trained actors, of men passing from themselves into the personalities and situations of others, mutually appropriating one another's traits and experiences, supplementing themselves with one another. This varied practice of reason, imagination, and sympathy in assuming inner states and their outer signs is the most effective culture and drill there is for freeing human nature from the slavery of routine, and perfecting its entrance on that heritage of unlimited sympathetic fellowships which will at last realize the hydrostatic paradox in morals, and make one man commensurate with all humanity. A drop balances an ocean by its dynamic translation and interplay with all the drops!

Whatever dissent or qualification may be made by some to the foregoing view, there will scarcely be any hesitation or difference of opinion when we turn from the representation of bad characters or neutral characters, the vile and the insignificant, to the grandest forms of the drama, where we encounter the most

pathetic and brilliant impersonations of ideal excellence,—those patterns of loveliness and heroism with which the Stage abounds in its pictures of stainless and queenly women, fearless and kingly men. The natural influence of weeping over the misfortunes and wrongs or worshipping the virtues of a saintly sufferer, who resists not, complains not, resents not, but bears all with angelic patience, sweetness, and fortitude, is to soften and expand the heart and cultivate the tenderest graces of human nature. The natural influence of tracing the indomitable enterprise, valor, disinterestedness, and perseverance of a great genius, an illustrious patriot or martyr, thrilling with the deepest admiration at his virtues, is to foster in the susceptible breast burning aspirations after kindred worth and distinction. This tendency may be neutralized or prevented, but it is the natural influence, by which alone it is fair to judge the best specimens of the drama. And he who should undertake to estimate the total influence of the Stage in the model characters it has held up as ideals for honor and imitation, would have a task not less difficult than genial.

While War and Work, with the rehearsing discipline they exact, occupy and ravage the fairest fields and promises of Human Life, and create Weariness, Crime, Lust, and Death, as the horrid Reapers who tread close in their steps, the Theatre—one bright home of Freedom, Art, and Beauty, planted in a paradisal place—is prophetic of the time to come when Love and Leisure shall have room to people the redeemed world with their fair and sweet offspring, Play and Joy.

In the mean time, while the spirit of doubt, banter, and insincerity is so rife,—while we meet on every hand that arid, cynical, and contemptuous temper which thrives on mockery and badinage, fosters an insolent complacency and laughter by degrading superior persons and subjects in parodies and lampoons,—while our young men and women are infested with a boastful conceit of superiority to all sentiment and enthusiasm, and even our rising authors are so disenchanted, so knowing, that persiflage and the ridicule of illusion and devotion are their highest tests of experience and power,—under such conditions, surely we shall all agree that the ideal revelations, the impassioned music and eloquence, the free elevation above commonplace, the por-

trayals of ingenuous faith and energy, that still linger on the Stage, are to be held precious. Amidst so much formality and hypocrisy, it is a boon to have a great actor break into us through the crust of custom and startle our noblest powers into life.

The actor, in laboring to fit himself for the highest walk in his profession, studies all forms of human nature and experience, discriminates their ranks and worth, sees what is congruous and becoming, or the contrary, and reproduces their powers in himself by the practice of putting on their states and showing their signals. This done disinterestedly, with a sovereign eye to duty and the Divine Will, is the way for every one to educate himself towards that personal perfection the pursuit of which is his supreme business on earth. He thus learns to assume and absorb the ascending ideals that brighten the pathway to heaven. Herein the dramatic art becomes glorified into identity with religion.

The lowest range of the histrionic inhabitations of the soul is *obsession*, where the man is insanely held by some inferior or evil spirit, as when Nebuchadnezzar went out and ate grass, like an ox. The next grade is *sympathetic domination*, where the idea of another being is so vividly seated in the imagination of a person that for the time it makes him its involuntary agent. The intermediate or neutral level, half-way from the lowest to the highest, is the region of *voluntary assumption*, or acting properly so called, where the player by his own free intelligence and will reproduces or imitates foreign characters. Then there is the ascent into *inspiration*, where loftier influences or spirits than are native to the impersonator take possession of him, enhancing his powers, animating and guiding him beyond his own knowledge or volition. And lastly, there is the supreme height of *divine incarnation*, where some deity stoops into the cloud of mortality, or the infinite God in varying degrees deigns to inflesh and enshrine himself in man. Christendom owns one unapproachable and incomparable example in its august Founder. But in India, Egypt, Greece, were mystic men, who, too wise and grand to be thought lunatics, have claimed to be of a lineage divine and dateless. This is a realm for silence. But every unique, whether Gautama or Jesus, is only the transcending culmination of a rule that rises through levels below. Either great men have played the rôles of incarnate gods or descending gods have assumed the rôles of men on earth.

CHAPTER V.

THE DRAMATIC APPRENTICE AND STROLLING PLAYER.

When Edwin was nine years old, he was thin, pale, and had a slight forward stoop of the chest and shoulders. He was full of fire, courage, impulsive force, but had a quick pulse, a nervous habit, a sensitive brain and skin. The tears came easily to his eyes, and under severe exertion his endurance quickly gave out. At that time he seemed a fair candidate for consumption and an early grave. His father is known, on several occasions, to have expressed fears that he should not be able to raise him.

A fortunate occurrence set the boy at work just at the right time and in the right direction. Wherever a Circus travels through the country, its performances take powerful effect on the impressible sympathies of energetic and ambitious youths. As it departs, it often leaves behind it a line of emulous lads, in mimic repetition of its scenes, climbing ropes, leaping bars, walking on their hands, standing on their heads, throwing somersaults, or posturing, balancing, and wrestling. Such an experience befell Edwin, and his physical improvement under it was rapid. It deepened his breathing, invigorated the circulation of his blood, and straightened him up, bringing out his breast and throwing back his shoulders. And in his seventeenth year, the period which we have now reached, he was as fine a specimen of a manly youth as one might wish to see. He had a free, open bearing, with steadily-confronting eyes, and a clear, deep voice. He had never been bashful; neither was he ever impudent or shameless. He was at once self-possessed and modest, combining an air of sincerity and justice with an expression of democratic independence. Such was the result, in his outward appearance, of his character, his parental inheritance and training, his dramatic practice, and his gymnastic exercises.

Accordingly, when, early in the September of 1822, it was

announced that the proprietors of the three theatres at Pittsburg, Lexington, and Cincinnati had come to Philadelphia for the purpose of engaging a company to perform alternately in those cities, and young Forrest, depressed and impatient from the failure of his previous attempts to secure a regular engagement, made personal application to manager Jones, that gentleman was so much pleased with his words and his bearing that he at once struck a bargain with him. The agreement was that for a compensation of eight dollars a week he should play, without a question, whatever parts he was cast in, no matter how high or how low the parts were. He was willing now, despite his precocious starring experiences, to take this humble position and hold himself ready for anything at the beck and call of his superior, because he had come keenly to feel how little he knew and how much he had to learn. And his sound sense, with the good advice he had received, taught him that there offered no other way so thoroughly and rapidly to master his profession as by submitting to a regular drill in the miscellaneous parts of the working stage, from top to bottom. He saw his path to the dramatic throne through the steps of a docile and patient apprenticeship.

It was always a characteristic of him that he was unwilling to utter words while ignorant of their meaning. He studied what he was to speak, that he might speak it with intelligence and propriety. Whether right or wrong, he would, as a rule, always know what he meant to do, and why and how. In illustration of this teachable spirit an incident may be adduced which he ever gratefully remembered as one of the most influential in his life.

When he was but fourteen, he was one evening in front of one of the Philadelphia theatres, when his attention was fixed on two large statues, or mythological figures, each carved from a single block of wood, pedestal and all, placed in niches at each side of the entrance. Under them were inscribed the names Thalia and Melpomene. "Who are Thallea and Melpomeen?" he asked of an elder comrade with whom he was wont to practise histrionics in the Thespian Club. "Oh, I don't know; a couple of Grecian queens, I guess," was the reply. A gentleman, handsomely dressed, with a benignant face and graceful mien, who had overheard the question and the answer, stepped

forward, took Edwin by the hand, and said, "My lad, these figures, whose names you have not pronounced correctly, represent two characters in the old Greek mythology. This one, with the mask and the mirror, is Thalia, the Muse of Comedy. That one, with the dagger and the bowl, is Melpomene, the Muse of Tragedy. They are appropriately painted here, because the theatre is the home of the drama, where both comedies and tragedies are performed. Now, my boy, if you like to learn, there is a book, which you can get at any book-store, called Walker's Classical Pronouncing Dictionary, to which on all such occasions you can refer and find just what you want to know." It was a beautiful action. And it fell on good soil. Edwin bought the volume, and he never ceased to practise the lesson or to be thankful to him who gave it, and on whose unknown head, even to the end of life, his grateful heart showered benedictions. When, many years later, that theatre was taken down, Forrest, in memory of the incident above related, had the two statues purchased for him, intending to set them up in his own private theatre.

Edwin was an affectionate boy, who won affection from others notwithstanding his somewhat reckless spirit of adventure, frequent coarseness of speech, and violence of temper. He was sympathetic, as dramatic genius perforce must be, quick in intelligence, keen and eager in observation, and of an honest manner and make throughout. He was throbbing with hope and aspiration before the new prospect opened to him as he went around to say farewell to those he loved, his favorite companions among the amateur Thespians, and his benefactors. As he took the hand of one after another and said good-bye, the cuff of his sleeve repeatedly went to his eyes, and he felt those bitter twinges of pain familiar to boyish bosoms on such partings in all generations and all over the world. He went to the tannery, where, on the old stone table, his declamations as a proud and happy child had been applauded by Lorman and his fellow-workmen. He visited the tomb of his father, and the house of his kind old pastor. Then came the last and severest trial of his fortitude, the taking leave of his sisters, and, above all, of his mother, who was always enshrined in his inmost soul as an object of the most tender and sacred love. He girded himself up and got through with it, he hardly knew how.

One small and humble trunk held all his effects,—a very scant wardrobe, a few trifling keepsakes, a Bible the gift of his mother, an edition of Shakspeare in one cheap volume, Walker's Classical Pronouncing Dictionary, and a little collection of plays in pamphlet form. Joining the company which Collins and Jones had gathered, consisting of about a dozen persons, male and female, they regarded one another with mutual interest; and, with that intuitive reading of character which their professional art bestows, they in an amazingly short time were intimately acquainted, and quite prepared to share adventures, confidences, and lives. Besides Collins and Jones, there were Groshorn, Scott, Eberle, leader of the orchestra, Lucas, scene-painter, Henderson, stage manager, Davis, Mrs. Pelby, Mrs. Riddle, Miss Fenton, Miss Sallie Riddle, and Miss Eliza Riddle. Several of these not only had varied and ripe experience of the stage, but were also highly distinguished for their talents and accomplishments. This was especially the case with Mrs. Pelby and Mrs. Riddle.

The magnetic personality, the inexperienced youth, the attractive ingenuousness, and the enthusiastic ambition of Forrest made him at once a prominent object of attention in the company, all of whom were ready to give him such instructions and aids as were in their power. But, above all the rest, to the constant generous kindness and teaching of Mrs. Riddle he always expressed himself as deeply indebted for services rendered at the most critical period of his life, and whose record remained as fresh in his latest memory as their results were indelible in his being.

About the middle of October they began playing in Pittsburg, in a building so ruinous and dilapidated that on rainy nights the audience in the pit held up their umbrellas to screen themselves from the leakings through the roof. The first performance was Douglas, Forrest sustaining the part of Young Norval with much applause. In the course of the season here he played many characters, in tragedy, comedy, farce, and ballet. In grappling with these subordinate parts he afterwards said he could distinctly remember that he often felt ashamed to find how ignorant he was, and was almost appalled at the immense task before him in becoming the actor he wished to be. But the progress he felt he

was making, combined with the unstinted praise he received, kept his spirits at a high point.

The following letter, dated Pittsburg, October 10th, 1822, is the earliest letter from him to his mother found among his papers after his death:

"DEAR MOTHER,—I arrived here yesterday at about eleven o'clock, and am much pleased with the place and its inhabitants. I was quite out of patience riding so long in the stage over such tremendous mountains, but was greatly delighted, on reaching the summit of them, to view the surrounding country,—so vast and varied a landscape.

"Pittsburg is three hundred miles from Philadelphia. It is a sort of London in miniature, very black and smoky. The Alleghany River and Mountains surround it. The theatre is very old.

"This, you know, is the first time I have ever been away from you. I have felt many qualms of homesickness, and I miss you, dear, dear mother, more than words can give out. Has William gone to Petersburg? Furnish me with every particular, especially how our Tid is, and whether she reads with the yard-stick. Give me an account, too, of my Grandma, and of my *beautiful* Sister. The long ride in the stage has made my hurdies so callous that they would ward off a cannon-ball.

"Give my respects to all my friends, particularly to Philip. Inform me also, if you can, how the Tivoli Garden gets on. Write as early as possible, and pray pay the postage, as I am out of funds. I expect the managers by the next stage. Mr. Hughes, formerly of the Walnut Street Theatre, is here. I find him a perfect gentleman.

"Your affectionate son,

"EDWIN FORREST."

In a short time the company collected their properties and took passage on the Ohio River in a flat-boat for Maysville, Kentucky. They floated lazily along for five days and nights, in delightful weather, through lovely scenery new to the most of them, filling the time with stories, games, and jokes,—a happy set, careless, healthy, and as gay and free as the ripples of the

stream that glanced around them. They played at Maysville a few evenings with excellent success, greatly delighting the rude Kentuckians, who thronged in from miles around.

Departing thence, they journeyed to Lexington, then the most important town in the State, where they were encouraged to make a considerable tarry, as they found a nice theatre, good patronage, and an uncommonly intelligent auditory. The Transylvania University was here, under the presidency of the celebrated Horace Holley. Many of the teachers and pupils of the University attended the performances night after night. Forrest was looked on as a lad of extreme promise. He made many friends among the students. One of these friendships in particular, that formed with young James Taylor, son of a wealthy planter of Newport, was kept unbroken to the end of his life.

In 1870, Mr. William D. Gallagher, an old and dear friend of Mr. Forrest, visited Col. Taylor at his estate in Newport. Taylor gave him many pleasing reminiscences of his early days and his romantic friendship with the young actor, then so world-famous. He said that while at Lexington he one night invited Forrest to his hotel. He acceded, without waiting to change his costume as Young Norval. He spent the night with him, sharing his bed, and breakfasted with him the next morning. After breakfast, as he went to his own quarters in another street, the boys, attracted by his theatrical dress, followed him with shouts and cheers.

President Holley was a man of very extraordinary oratorical power. He was really a man of genius, his freedom of thought and his æsthetic culture far in advance of his time. He had a great fame in his day, but, leaving no visible work behind him, his name is now but a faded tradition. He was so much struck by the performances of Forrest that he generously sought him out and held several long interviews with him, in which, with a masterly power which profoundly impressed his youthful listener, he unfolded his views of art and of life and urged him to cherish noble aspirations in the profession he had chosen. This contact with the veteran preacher was one of the moulding points in the career of the player. Such acts of condescension and disinterestedness—or perhaps it is juster to call them acts of love and duty—are charming and are divinely encouraging. There are

more of them in the world than we think, though certainly there are far fewer of them than there ought to be. The record of each, while delightful to contemplate, is a stimulus to produce others.

Holley urged Forrest to curb his taste for comic and farcical parts and as soon as possible to cease appearing in such characters. He strove to impress on him a deeper sense of his fitness for the highest walks of tragedy, and explained to him most eloquently the noble qualities the enactment of such parts both required and cultivated in the performer, as well as the valuable lessons they taught to the spectator. He also dwelt at length on the true principle of the dramatic art, which he maintained to be not merely to hold the mirror up to crude nature, but to give a choice and refined presentation of the truth. Nature, he said, is reality, but art is ideality. The actor is not to reflect all the direct and unrelieved facts of nature, but to present a selective and softened or intensified reflection of them. Art plays the tune of nature, he held, but with variations. He uttered these and other thoughts with such remarkable grace and precision that Forrest said the conversation made an epoch in his mind, although he differed from him in opinion, then and always holding that the purpose of acting was to show the exact truth of nature. Holley was right; and it is notable that his youthful auditor in rejecting the view he advocated accurately marked his own central defect not less than his most conspicuous merit as an actor.

Closing their season at Lexington, February 22d, 1823, the company started across the country for Cincinnati, the women with the theatrical paraphernalia in covered wagons, the men on horseback. Their good humor and abundant faculty for finding or making enjoyment in everything stood them in hand during the journey, which their rude accommodations and the wintry weather would otherwise have made cheerless enough. They opened in Cincinnati, in the old Columbia Street Theatre, on the evening of March 6th, 1823. The play was The Soldier's Daughter. Forrest, who lacked just three days of being seventeen years old, was assigned the humble part of Malfort, a serious walking gentleman. His range of casts during this season was extremely varied, reaching from the heights of dire tragedy

to the level of ridiculous pantomime. He danced in the then popular ballet of Little Red Riding-Hood. He often sang comic songs between the plays. Eberle, who was a good violinist, on one occasion appeared as an old broken soldier with a wooden leg and a fiddle, accompanied by Forrest as his daughter in a ragged female dress. The father fiddled, the daughter sang with laughable pathos,—

"Oh, cruel was my parients, as tored my love from me;
And cruel was the great big ship as tooked him off to sea;
And cruel was the capitaine and the boswain and the men,
As didn't care a fardin if we never met agen."
(Tears.)

The performance was encored so warmly that it was repeated many successive nights. He also played Corinthian Tom in the extravaganza of Tom and Jerry, Lubin in the Wandering Boys of Switzerland, and Blaize in the Forest of Bondy, or the Dog of Montargis. In the last character he sang this song:

"Bondy's forest,—full of leaves;
Bondy's forest,—full of thieves;
They hold your bridle, take your cash,
And then they give your throat a gash.
Sing la, la, la, la, la."

At this time he had a trained dog, who knew as much as a great many men. He was strongly attached to this dog, who appeared on the stage with him in the Forest of Bondy and acted his part with striking effect. He was a frisky and mischievous creature. He occupied the same room with Edwin; and one morning he took advantage of the leisure his habits as an early riser gave him to gnaw and tear in pieces one of his master's only pair of boots. The poor actor was in a dilemma. He had no money and no credit. In his wrath he thought of whipping the dog. But that would boot nothing. The innocent creature knew no better. So he pretended to have a sore foot, put a bandage on it, borrowed an old slipper, and hobbled about until his wages fell due and enabled him to buy a pair of shoes.

In contrast with the above-named comic casts, Forrest took the second parts to the Damon, Brutus, and Virginius of the stars

Pelby and Pemberton, and at his own benefit played Richard the Third.

Without making a great sensation or achieving any brilliant success, he was decidedly popular. Sol Smith and Moses Dawson, editors of the two Cincinnati newspapers at that time, both praised him highly and prophesied his future eminence. Moses Dawson—a leading Democrat of the West, the first to raise the political banner inscribed with the name of Andrew Jackson, and who is said to have died of joy at the triumph of his party in the Presidential election of 1844—wrote the earliest earnest and studious criticisms ever composed on the acting of Forrest. He carefully noted all the points and peculiarities of the youthful performer, honestly stated his defects and faults, generously signalized his excellences, and made judicious suggestions for his profit. His candid and thoughtful words were of great service to the boy, and were never forgotten by the man.

A specimen from one of these articles will be of interest: "Mr. Forrest has a finely-formed and expressive countenance, expressing all the passions with marvellous exactness and power, and he looks the character of Richard much better than could be expected from a person of his years. He assumes a stately majesty of demeanor, passes suddenly to wheedling hypocrisy, and then returns to the haughty strut of towering ambition, with a facility which sufficiently evidence that he has not only deeply studied but also well understood the immortal bard. The scene with Lady Ann appeared to us unique, and superior to everything we have ever seen, not excepting Kemble or Cooke. In the soliloquies he uttered the sentiments as if they had arisen in his mind in that regular succession, and we never once caught his eye wandering towards the audience. Of the tent scene we do not hesitate to say that it was a very superior piece of acting. Horror and despair were never more forcibly represented. We consider Mr. Forrest's natural talents of the highest grade, and we hope his good sense will prevent him from being so intoxicated with success as to neglect study and industry. We are willing to render to youthful talent a full meed of praise; but while we applaud, we would caution. Applause should not be received as a reward, but as an incentive to still further exertion to deserve it."

During his first engagement in Cincinnati, Forrest boarded

with widow Bryson, on Main Street. Almost half a century afterwards, William D. Gallagher sought this excellent woman out, and obtained from her some very interesting reminiscences. It seems that General Harrison, who was subsequently President of the United States, came to Mrs. Bryson one day and asked her to do him the favor to take as a boarder a young man named Edwin Forrest, who was then playing at one of the theatres. The General said he feared, if the youth boarded with the other players, he would form bad habits. He wished to guard him from this, as he considered him a young man of extraordinary ability, and destined to excel in his profession. She assented. She said he was at that time a beautiful boy, with deep and very dark brown eyes, a complexion of marble clearness mantling with blood, and a graceful, sinewy form. He once made her very angry by an insulting remark concerning one of the female boarders, whose conduct did not suit his ideas of propriety. Mrs. Bryson declared that she would not have such language used at her table. He replied that of course he did not apply it to her. But she could not forget, and sent for General Harrison, and related the matter to him. He brought Edwin before her. The youth hung down his head. "Poor fellow!" added the old lady, "it has been a long time since then. Forty-six or seven years. Yet I can plainly see him standing there now!" Eying him sternly, the General said, "Sir, the father of this lady was a Revolutionary soldier; her husband was one of my trusty officers in the late war; and she is a lady whom I highly esteem. When I introduced you into her family, I did not suppose you would treat her with disrespect; and I now ask you to make her a humble apology." Edwin raised his head and said, "General, I did make a severe remark concerning a particular person whom Mrs. Bryson thinks she knows, but does not. It was an unguarded act. I am very sorry for it, and ask her a thousand pardons. I assure you, madam, I would not, under any circumstances, use words to hurt your feelings." He then turned and made a humble excuse to Harrison, who reprimanded him with severity. It did him good; it was a lesson he never forgot. But Mrs. Bryson confessed that she learned soon after that he was right in what he had said about the woman.

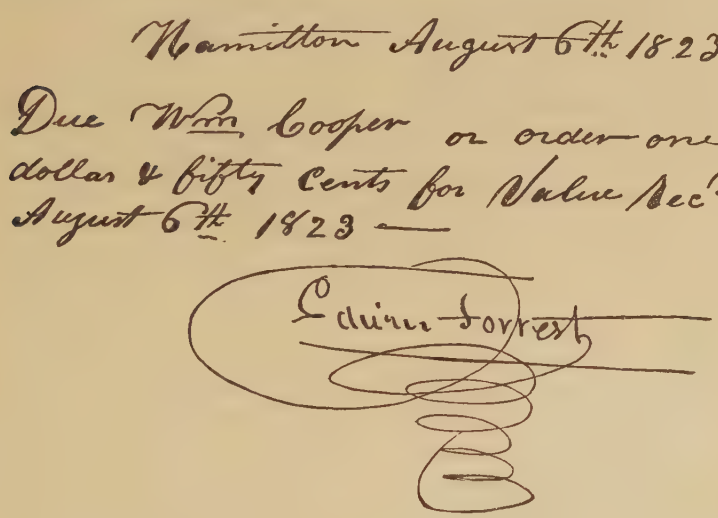
One Sunday evening there came up a dreadful thunder-storm. As the thunders crashed and rattled, the frightened women, with Mrs. Bryson at their head, rushed into Edwin's room. He went to the window, raised it, took his sword and waved it out. When the electric flashes broke, it looked as if the lightnings were dancing on the point of his sword. The women fled out of his room with even greater terror than they had come into it, and he laughed heartily to see them scamper.

Gallagher was present at an interview of Mrs. Bryson and her daughter with Mr. Forrest in 1869, the first time they had met for forty-six years. Although the daughter, Mrs. Kemp, was but a little girl when they parted, he recognized her at the first glance. They spent a long time in unrestrained enjoyment, talking over the events of the old times as if they were things that had occurred but a few days previously. Mrs. Bryson exclaimed, "Oh, Edwin Forrest, I can scarcely realize it when I look at you and think what a beautiful boy you were when we last met, and now see you such a great, heavy man, and getting into age, too!"

At the end of the winter, Collins and Jones found their enterprise a pecuniary failure. They incontinently shut up the theatre and turned the whole company out to shift for themselves as best they could. These poor children of Thespis were in a pitiful plight. Without money, without employment or prospects, what could they do? About a dozen of them, including Forrest, Mrs. Riddle, and her two daughters, determined to extemporize a vagrant company, travel into the country, and try their fortune from town to town. Their action was as prompt as their pluck was good and their means small. With a couple of rickety wagons and two dreadfully thin old horses, they started off for Hamilton, most of them on foot. It is interesting to contemplate the little band of strolling players as they thus set out on their adventures. On their journey they scrutinized many a passing itinerant unlike themselves, laughed and sang in jovial liberty, while the birds sang around them by day and the stars twinkled over their heads by night. If there were hardships in it, tough and scanty fare, rude conditions, weary trudges, harsh treatment, wretched patronage, there were also in it rich experiences of life at first hand, a rough relish, a free existence in the

open air, and all the traditional associations linking them to the strollers of other times and lands, wandering minstrels, beggars, apprentices, gypsies, and those travelling groups of actors who used to perform in the yards of inns or the halls of baronial castles, and a specimen of whom found a so much better than lenten entertainment from the hands of Hamlet at Elsinore.

After performing at Hamilton for eight or ten nights, in the second story of a venerable barn, with more applause than profit, they went to Lebanon. An interesting reminiscence of this time is given by the following fac-simile of a note afterwards redeemed by its signer, and found carefully preserved among his papers at his death:


Hamilton August 6th 1823

Due Wm. Cooper or order one dollar & fifty Cents for Value Rec'd August 6th 1823

Edwin Forrest

They met little encouragement at Lebanon, and proceeded to Dayton, where they had still poorer success. In fact, their funds and their hopes gave out together, and they agreed to disperse. Forrest had not one cent in his pocket. He started on foot for Cincinnati, a distance of about forty miles. Journeying along on the bank of the Big Miami River, he spied a canoe on the other shore. How much easier it would be to float than to walk! He stripped, plunged, and swam. As soon as he was near enough to see that the boat was chained and locked, the owner of it appeared and pointed a gun at him. He made back-

ward strokes to his clothes, and resumed his plod. It was evening when he reached Cincinnati, pretty well fagged out. Some of his acquaintances met him in the street, said an amateur club were that night to play the farce of Miss in her Teens across the river at Newport, that one of the fellows was drunk, and asked him if he would fill the vacancy. He consented to do it for five dollars. They agreed to give that price, and he went and did it. The excessive fatigue probably made it the hardest-earned, as it was the sorest-needed, five dollars he ever received. It nearly exhausted the proceeds of the performance.

In a short time the scattered strollers rejoined their forces at Louisville to try one more experiment. They succeeded moderately well. But Archibald Woodruff, keeper of the Globe Inn in Cincinnati, had fitted up a hasty and cheap structure adjoining his tavern, and christened it the Globe Theatre. He invited the Louisville company to come and open it. They did so on the evening of June 2d, 1823, with Douglas, Forrest as Norval. June 4th they gave the play of The Iron Chest, Forrest as Sir Edward Mortimer, Mrs. Riddle as Lady Helen. On subsequent nights he sustained among other characters those of George Barnwell, Octavian in The Mountaineers, Jaffier in Venice Preserved, and Richard the Third, besides several parts in low comedy.

But perhaps the most surprising fact connected with this portion of his career is that he was the first actor who ever represented on the stage the Southern plantation negro with all his peculiarities of dress, gait, accent, dialect, and manners. This he did ten years before T. D. Rice, usually denominated the originator of the Ethiopian drama, made his début at the Bowery in the character of Jim Crow. Rice deserves his fame, for, though preceded first by Forrest, and then in a more systematic fashion by George W. Dixon, he was the man who really popularized the burnt-cork and burlesque minstrelsy and made it the institution it became.

The fortunes of the Globe were in such a state that the establishment was on the point of breaking up, when Sol Smith hired it for one night. He brought out three pieces, the comedy of Modern Fashions, a farce entitled The Tailor in Distress, and the pantomime of Don Quixote. He agreed to pay each performer

two dollars. For this sum Forrest acted a dandy in the first play, a negro in the second, and Sancho Panza in the third. The Tailor in Distress was a light affair, composed by Sol Smith, turning on local matters well known and very ludicrous. The part of Ruban, the negro, assigned to Forrest, was full of songs, dances, and fun. He was a servant, and his wife, who had nothing to say, was to appear with him as a help to set off his performance. He blacked himself up and rigged his costume quite to his content, when it occurred to his thought that no one had been got for the part of his black wife. He applied to the women of the theatre, but not one of them was willing to black herself for the occasion. He recollected his old African washerwoman, who lived in a shanty close by. He hurried thither and knocked and went in. Dinah cried, "Wha, bress me! who am dis? Gosh-a-massy, who be you? Whose chile am you?" He answered, in a negro voice, "Wha, Dinah, duzzent you know Sambo?" "What Sambo?" she answered. "No, I duzzent know nothin' about you. Who is you?" "Heaw! heaw! You duzzent know me! Now, don't you petend you am ign'rant ob dis chile." "Well, I say I be, and want to know who you am!" Time was pressing, and he said, in simple earnest, "Dinah, I am Mr. Forrest, from the theatre. I am all blacked and dressed to play the part of a negro, and I must have a black wife to go on the stage with me. I want you to do it." The astonished and incredulous washerwoman responded, "De debbil you does!" Sharply examining her visitor, she recognized him. "Reely, now, it be de fac'. You am Mass' Forrest. But what a funny nigger you am! You nigger all ober!" "Yes, Dinah, but hurry along, or we shall be late." "Well, I duzzent care; I goes along wid you anyhow." So they hastened arm-in-arm to the theatre, and got there just in time. The appearance of the darkies was greeted with loud applause, and when Ruban began to let out the regular cuffy, as he always could in the most irresistible way, with wide and suddenly breaking inflections of voice, breathing guffaw, and convulsive double-shuffle, the enthusiasm of the audience reached the highest pitch. The play was repeated several nights to crowds.

The Distressed Tailor referred to a well-known representative of that profession, named Platt Evans, who was a very curious and original character. He was interviewed by Mr. Gallagher

in 1869, who found him a hale, active man of over eighty, and still fond of his joke. Old Platt said, "The farce was a da-da-da-dam good thing; on-on-only the character of me wa-was not true, as he stu-stu-stu-stuttered, and I do-don't stu-stu-stutter!" He said he made a suit of clothes for Forrest in 1823, and that once when he was in the store a fellow accused him of being stuffed. Forrest took off his coat and vest, and, striking his breast, exclaimed, "No, there is no padding here. It is all honest, and I mean it always shall be!"

It was now the end of July. The theatre was shut, the actors adrift and penniless. It was a hard time for them. Mrs. Riddle and her two daughters lived for awhile in Newport in a little dilapidated cottage, and Forrest spent part of his time with them. Invited to a party on one occasion, he was in want of a clean shirt and collar. Mrs. Riddle took a collar and a handkerchief of her own, washed and ironed them, pinned the collar on, tied a piece of ribbon around his neck, fastened the handkerchief over the bosom of his dingy shirt, and sent him smilingly off to the festivity, where his disguise was probably little suspected. Young, full of healthy blood, with a fiery imagination, it took but little to make him happy in those days. And yet, poor, ill clad, unemployed, with only a few chance friends, at a distance from mother and home, it took but little to make him very unhappy.

For several weeks he obtained almost his sole food from the corn-fields of General Taylor across the river in Newport. He used to break off an armful of ears, take them to his old negro washerwoman, and get her to boil them for him. Sometimes he made a fire under some stones out in the field, roasted the corn and ate it without salt. It was a Spartan dinner; but, fortunately, he had a Spartan appetite.

During this period he one day rowed over the river to Covington and climbed a sightly eminence there wooded with a growth of oaks. He sat down under a huge tree, pulled from his pocket his well-worn copy of Shakspeare, and began to read. He had on a somewhat ragged coat and a dilapidated pair of stage-boots whose gilding contrasted with the rusty remainder of his costume. He was no little depressed that day with loneliness and thinking of his destitute condition and precarious outlook. He fell upon this passage in King Henry IV.:

"O God! that one might read the book of Fate,
And see the revolution of the times
Make mountains level, and the continent,
Weary of solid firmness, melt itself
Into the sea! and, other times, to see
The beachy girdle of the ocean
Too wide for Neptune's hips; how chances mock,
And changes fill the cup of alteration
With divers liquors! O, if this were seen,
The happiest youth—viewing his progress through,
What perils past, what crosses to ensue—
Would shut the book, and sit him down and die."

Edwin felt melancholy enough as he laid the volume on his knee, and his head sank on his bosom in painful musing. After a long time, breaking from his reverie, he looked up. There stood, erect before him, a stout grape-vine. Apparently its tendrils had been torn from the oak by whose side it grew, and finding itself cast off, alone, deprived of its sustaining protection, it had rallied upon its own roots, spread and deepened them, and now held itself bravely up in solitary independence, as if it were not a vine but a tree. The moral lesson electrified him. He took new heart, with the feeling that it would be shameful for him to succumb when even a poor plant could thus conquer. Twenty years afterwards, with a grateful memory of the incident, he bought that whole woodland region, of some sixty acres, and named it Forrest Hill. He owned it at the day of his death.

After another brief trial of the theatre at Lexington, late in the autumn, Collins and Jones grew discouraged, gave up their business, and released Forrest from his contract with them. James H. Caldwell, an extremely good light comedian, and for many years proprietor and manager of the theatre in New Orleans, wrote to him opportunely, offering him an engagement for the ensuing season at a salary of eighteen dollars a week. It is said that Caldwell was led to make this proposition from his remembrance of having once seen the youth make an original point of great power in the part of Richard the Third. It was in the tent scene. All previous actors had been wont to awake from the dream in a state of extreme affright, and either sit on the side of the couch or stand near it. Forrest sprang from his reclining posture, rushed forward to the foot-lights, and there fell upon his knees, with his whole frame trembling, his face blanched with

terror, his sword grasped by the hilt in one hand and with the point in the floor, the sword itself so shaking that it could be heard all over the house. The intense realism with which this was done made it sensational in an extraordinary degree.

When Forrest had accepted the proposal from Caldwell, the thought of the long, long journey and the time that must elapse before he should see his mother again gave him a homesick feeling. He shrank from his engagement. Learning that his acquaintance Sol Smith was then in Lexington collecting a troupe to play in Cincinnati, he called on him and urgently begged to be employed. He said he had rather serve under him for ten dollars a week than under a stranger for eighteen. He was steadily refused. He went over to a circus which then chanced to be there, and hired himself out for a year. Smith says he heard of this with great mortification, and immediately called at the circus. There, he adds, sure enough, was Ned in all his glory, surrounded by riders, tumblers, and grooms. He was slightly abashed at first, but, putting a good face on the affair, said, as he had been refused an engagement at ten dollars a week by his old friend, he had agreed with these boys for twelve. To convince Smith of his ability to sustain his new line of business, he turned a couple of flip-flaps on the spot. Smith took Edwin to his lodgings, and by dint of argument and persuasion succeeding in getting him to abandon the profession of clown and fulfil his promise to Caldwell.

He accordingly went to Louisville and took passage on a steamboat down the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers to New Orleans. On the trip he made the acquaintance of Winfield Scott and of John Howard Payne. The celebrated general and the gifted author of Sweet Home seem both to have been strongly attracted to the young actor. They held many long conversations with him, and brought out, from their ample stores of experience in the field and on the boards, anecdotes, principles, criticism, and advice, which were not only highly entertaining to him at the time but lastingly instructive and useful. He always accounted his meeting with these two men as a particular piece of good fortune. It betokens that he was at that period of his life an ingenuous and docile spirit, however impulsive and wild still attracting the sympathy and appropriating from the experience of his elders.

CHAPTER VI.

LIFE IN NEW ORLEANS.—CRITICAL PERIOD OF EXPERIENCE.

FORREST made his first appearance in New Orleans, at the American Theatre, as Jaffier in Venice Preserved, February 4th, 1824, Caldwell sustaining the part of Pierre. His individuality and his acting immediately made a strong impression on the general audience, and drew towards him the fervent personal interest of those particular individuals, both men and women, whose qualities of character caused them to feel a vivid curiosity and sympathy for highly-marked and expressive specimens of human nature. Accordingly, he very soon had many intimate friends among both sexes,—friends whose pronounced types of being and impassioned styles of life wrought assimilatingly upon him in that frank, lusty, and plastic period of his experience.

New Orleans at that time was a city of about thirty thousand inhabitants. It was the chief commercial and social capital of the South, and thoroughly conscious of its pre-eminence. On its small but concentrated scale it was the gayest, most Parisian city in the country. The Spanish and French blood of the original settlers of Louisiana and of their early followers was largely represented in its leading families. Then and there the chivalry of the slave-holding South, in all its patrician characteristics both of virtue and of vice, was at the acme of its glory. The types of men were unquestionably the most varied and sharply defined and pushed to the greatest extremes of development, the freedom and beauty of the women the most intoxicating and dangerous, the social life the most voluptuous, passionate, and reckless, of those of any city in the United States. Wealth was great, easily found, carelessly lost, leisure ample, pride intense, living luxurious, manly sports and exercises in physical training assiduously cultivated, gambling common, duelling and every form of desperate personal conflict constant, the code of man-

ners alternately bewitching in courtesy and terrible in ferocity. From every part of the State the gentlemen planters loved to congregate in New Orleans, perfect masters of their limbs, their faculties, their weapons, and their horses, not knowing fear or embarrassment, living their thoughts and passions spontaneously out, their tall forms aflush with bold sensibility, the rich strength and grace of the thoroughbred pointing their elastic motions. And in the parlor, the ball-room, at fashionable resorts, on the promenades, the women were the peers of the men in their intensity of being, their fondness of adventure, their courage, brilliance, and piquancy. The crossing of tropical bloods, the long lineage of aristocratic habitudes of ardent indulgence and leisurely culture, had produced a class of women famed throughout the land for the symmetry of their forms, the visible music of their movements, the dreamy softness of their voices, and the bewildering charm of their eyes, swimming seas of languor and fire. Many an imaginative and burning nature asked no other paradise than the arms of these Creole houris. But, unfortunately, the reverse of being immortal, its dissolving views melted into degradation and vanished in death, too often with accompaniments of frantic jealousy, crime, and horror.

These men and these women, naturally enough, were fascinating to the adolescent actor, whose faculties were all aglow with ambition to excel, whose curiosity was on edge in every direction to know the contents of the living world which it was his profession to portray, and whose passions were just breaking from their fullest bud. Nor was he any less fascinating to them. His bluff courage, his young formative docility and eagerness, his smiling openness of face and bearing, so sadly changed in later years, and the nameless badge of personal distinction and original force he bore on his front and in his accent, drew the men to make much of him. So the outlines of his slender but sinewy and breathing form with the muscles so superbly defined, the deep and mellow tones of his ringing voice in which the clang-tints of the whole organism were audible, his large and dark-brown eyes so clearly set and brilliant, his fresh blood teeming over him in vital revelation at each vehement mood, and the speaking truthfulness of his portrayals of thought and sentiment in character, magnetized the women, secured him many a flattering smile

and note and flower, and led to no slight experience in amours, which put their permanent stamp upon his inner being, and often rose out of the vistas of memory in pictures when he shut his eyes and mused in his lonely old age. A biography of Forrest which omitted these things would be like a description of the Saint Lawrence without an allusion to Niagara.

In his opening manhood, before repeated experiences of injustice, slander, and treachery had in any degree soured and closed his soul, Forrest had a heart as much formed for friendship as for love. He was full of ingenuous life, sportive, affectionate, every way most companionable. His friendships were fervent and faithfully cherished. The disappointments, the revulsions of feeling, and the results on his final character, we shall see in the later stages of this biography.

Caldwell felt a strong interest in the young actor, and was of service to him outside of the theatre as well as within it. He introduced him to a higher order of society with more aristocratic manners and refined accomplishments than he had been accustomed to, thus affording him an opportunity, had he been so minded, to make his upward way socially not less than professionally. As a keen observer and a quick learner, he did not fail to reap some valuable fruits from the advantages thus afforded him. But his forte lay not in this direction. He had then, and always afterwards, a deep distaste to all that is called fashionable society. He was insuperably democratic in his very bones. For the elaborate forms and conventionalities of the polite world he had a rooted repugnance. He wanted to be free and downright in honest speech and demeanor, making his outer manifestations correspond exactly with his inner states. He could not bear, in accordance with the conventions of the best society, to pretend to be inferior where he felt himself superior, to affect to be interested when he was bored, to express insincere nothings to give pleasure, and carefully hide his most earnest thoughts and feelings lest they should give pain. This art of polished intercourse—quite necessary in our world, and often as artistic and useful as it is artificial and compromising—he vehemently disliked and was never an adept in. Instead of gracefully appropriating it for its gracious uses while spurning its evils, he impatiently rebelled against it, stigmatizing it in blunt phrase as a

cursed hypocrisy. This defect in him it is needful to recognize as one of the keys to his character and career. His athletic, bluff nature, true and generous, lacked the flexible suavity of the spirituelle qualities, a lack which prevented his universal success, causing him to jar on persons of squeamish disposition or fastidious taste. Until a long series of revulsive experiences had trained him to be silent and reticent, his impulsive frankness and passionate love of freedom made it extremely irksome and chafing to him purposely to adapt himself to others at the expense of his own honest emotions. He never could be in the slightest degree a courtier or a tuft-hunter, but—like Edmund Kean, and many another man of genius whose abounding and impetuous soul loved nature and truth in their spontaneous forms more than any of the gilded substitutes for them—he ever preferred to be with those in whose presence he could act himself out just as he was and just as he felt. His playing in the theatre, instead of fitting, by reaction unfitted him for playing in society. If, on the stage, he consented to seem, all the more, off from it, he desired to be. The basis of this veritable self-assertion was his vigorous manliness; and so far it was creditable to him. But the extravagance to which he carried it partook of pride and wilfulness, and was an error and a fault. The code of fashion, tyrannical and imperfect as it is, has uses without which society could scarcely get on. It cannot be neglected with impunity. Forrest was no exception, but paid the penalty for his independence in the neglect with which Fashion, as such, always treated him.

Among the foibles which especially beset the histrionic profession are vanity, greed of applause, jealousy, invidious rivalry. Manager Caldwell was not free from these weaknesses. His pride as a player was as strong as his prudential regard for the interests of his theatre. No actor in the South had been a greater favorite, and no member of his company had ever rivalled him. He had carefully awakened an interest in advance for his protégé, saying to his friends that he had engaged in Kentucky a young man named Edwin Forrest, who had high talent, was industrious, resolved to rise to the top of the profession, and who, he was sure, would greatly please the New Orleans public. But when the pupil made such rapid progress and gained such loud plaudits that the master felt himself in danger of being

eclipsed, he had recourse to an artifice not uncommon, though certainly somewhat ungenerous. He reserved the best parts for himself, and cast his rising competitor in inferior or repulsive characters, most often in the part of an old man. Forrest saw the design and inwardly resented it, though he said nothing. He followed the wise course of trying to make the best he could of the part assigned him. He made a careful study of the peculiarities of age, in feature, in gait, in voice. He would often sit in places of public resort and critically watch every old man who came in or went out. Many a time when he had chanced to discover some striking example of power and dignity or of weakness and decrepitude in an old man he would follow him in the street and mentally imitate him, reproducing and fixing what he saw. In this way he soon attained such skill that his representations of these parts won him as much approval as he had ever received for the more congenial and showy rôles to which he had been accustomed.

Caldwell was fond of society, cared little for individuals, and, as some thought, held his theatrical vocation subsidiary to personal ends. The superficialities and insincerities of fashion did not distress him. Forrest had an aversion to society, a passion for individuals, and an intense ambition to excel in his art, which he loved for itself. It was quite natural that the friendship of men so unlike, to say nothing of their great disparity in years, should be streaked with coolnesses and gradually cease. It was not long in dying, though they continued to get along together comfortably, with some trifling exceptions, until their bond was suddenly ruptured by an irritating event which will be narrated on a succeeding page.

But it was outside of the circle of the theatrical company with which he was associated in New Orleans that Forrest found the most rich and decisive influences, at the same time developing his organism, moulding his character, and enhancing his dramatic powers. These influences were exerted on him chiefly through the five closest friends he had in the city, five men intimately grouped, to be the confidant of one of whom was to be the confidant of all, men of the most remarkable force and finish of personality each in his own kind, each of them an intense type of the class he represented. They were all men of great personal

beauty and strength, tall, supple, lithe, absolutely ignorant of fear, chivalrous in disposition, loose in habits, kind and loving in their native moods, but relentless and terrible in their wrath. Some insight into the sympathetic assimilation of these superb and fearful persons upon Forrest, and some tracing of the effect on his nature and on his art of the cycle of experience which they revealed to him partly by description, partly by personal introduction, are essential to an understanding of his great career.

Those who are often and long together influence one another more than is usually supposed. Their giving and taking of opinions, prejudices, habits, and even organic peculiarities, are far beyond their own conscious purpose or recognition. Not unfrequently intimate associates obviously grow like one another in look, action, voice, passion, type of character, quality of temper, style of manners, and mode of life. This is confessedly matter of observation ; but the law of its operation or the importance of the results very few understand. It is the sympathetic impartation and reproduction, between two or more parties, of inner states through outer signs ; and, as to noble qualities, it is proportioned in degree to the docility of the persons, combined with their richness of organization. Those who have plastic nervous systems copiously furnished with force, and who are eager to improve, take possession of one another's knowledge and accomplishments with marvellous celerity. By intuition and instinct they seem to reflect their contents and transmit their habitudes with mutual appropriation. In this unpurposed but saturating school of real life what the superior knows and does passes into the sympathetic observer by a sort of contagion. Those whose nerves are capable of the same kinds and rates of vibration play into each other and are attuned together, as the sounding string of one musical instrument propagates its pulses through the air and awakens a harmonic sound in the corresponding string of another instrument. This is the scientific basis of what is loosely called *human magnetism*, and it is a factor of incomparable import in the problem of human life.

The one of Forrest's New Orleans friends first to be named is James Bowie, inventor and unrivalled wielder of that terrible weapon for hand-to-hand fights named from him the bowie-knife. He was a member of the aristocratic class of the South, planter,

gentleman, traveller, adventurer, sweet-spoken, soft-mannered, poetic, and chivalrous, and possessed of a strength and a courage, a cool audacity and an untamable will, which seemed, when compared with any ordinary standard, superhuman. These qualities in a hundred conflicts never failed to bring him off conqueror. In heart, when not roused by some sinister influence, he was as open as a child and as loving as a woman. In soul high-strung, rich and free, in physical condition like a racing thoroughbred or a pugilist ready for the ring, an eloquent talker, thoroughly acquainted with the world from his point of view, he was a charming associate for those of such tastes, equally fascinating to friends and formidable to foes. As a personal competitor, taken nakedly front to front, few more ominous and magnificent specimens of man have walked on this continent.

His favorite knife, used by him awfully in many an awful fray, he presented as a token of his love to Forrest, who carefully preserved it among his treasured keepsakes. It was a long and ugly thing, clustering with fearful associations in its very look; plain and cheap for real work, utterly unadorned, but the blade exquisitely tempered so as not to bend or break too easily, and the handle corrugated with braids of steel, that it might not slip when the hand got bloody. Journeying in a stage-coach, in cold weather, after stopping for a change of horses a huge swaggering fellow usurped a seat belonging to an invalid lady, leaving her to ride on the outside. In vain the lady expostulated with him; in vain several others tried to persuade him to give up the place to her. At last a man who sat in front of the offender, so muffled and curled up in a great cloak that he looked very small, dropped the cloak down his shoulders, took his watch in his left hand, lifted a knife in his right, and, straightening himself up slowly till it seemed as if his head was going through the top of the coach, planted his unmoving eyes full on those of the intruder, and said, in a perfectly soft and level tone which gave the words redoubled power, "Sir, if within two minutes you are not out of that seat, by the living God I will cut your ears off!" The man paused a few seconds to take in the situation. He then cried, "Driver, let me out! I won't ride with such a set of damned murderers!" That was Bowie with his knife. Fearful, yet not without something admirable. Another anecdote of him

will illustrate still better the atmosphere of the class of men under whose patronizing influence Forrest came in the company of his friend Bowie.

The plantations of Bowie and a very quarrelsome Spaniard joined each other. The proprietors naturally fell out. The Spaniard swore he would shoot Bowie on the first chance. The latter, not liking to live with such an account on his hands, challenged his neighbor, who was a very powerful and skilful fighter with all sorts of weapons and had in his time killed a good many men. The Spaniard accepted the challenge, and fixed the following conditions for the combat. An oak bench six feet long, two feet high, and one foot wide should be firmly fastened in the earth. The combatants, stark naked, each with a knife in his right hand, its blade twelve inches in length, should be securely strapped to the bench, face to face, their knees touching. Then, at a signal, they should go at it, and no one should interfere till the fight was done. The murderous temper of the arrangements was not more evident than the horrible death of one of the men or of both was sure. But Bowie did not shrink. He said to himself, "If the Spaniard's hate is so fiendish, why, he shall have his bellyful before we end." All was ready, and a crowd stood by. Bowie may tell the rest himself, as he related it a dozen years after to Forrest, whose blood curdled while he listened.:

"We confronted each other with mutual watch, motionless, for a minute or two. I felt that it was all over with me, and a slight chill went through my breast, but my heart was hot and my brain was steady, and I resolved that at all events he should die too. Every fight is won in the eye first. Well, as I held my look rooted in his eye, I suddenly saw in it a slight quiver, an almost imperceptible sign of giving way. A thrill of joy shot through my heart, and I knew that he was mine. At that instant he stabbed at me. I took his blade right through my left arm, and at the same time, by an upward stroke, as swift as lightning and reaching to his very spine, I ripped him open from the abdomen to the chin. He gave a hoarse grunt, the whole of his insides gushed out, and he tumbled into my lap, dead."

An intimate of Bowie, and a firm patron and friend of Forrest, teaching him much by precept in answer to his inquiries, and contagiously imparting to him yet more by personal contact and

example, was Colonel Macaire. The real name of this man, and also those of the two succeeding members of the group, are replaced here by fictitious ones on account of their relatives who are still living. The two most prominent traits of Macaire in social life were his enthusiasm for the military art and his extreme fondness for horses. He was a finished soldier and officer. The martial discipline had left its results plainly all through his mind and his person, in a sensitive loyalty to the code of honor, an easy precision of movement, and an authoritative suavity of demeanor. The military art, on the whole, regarded in its influences on individuals and nations, is perhaps the richest in its power and the most exact in its methods of all the disciplines thus far developed in history. Its drill, faithfully applied to a fair subject, nourishes the habit of obedience and the faculty of command, regulates and refines the behavior, lifts the head, throws back the shoulders, brings out the chest, deepens the breathing, frees the circulation, and through its marching time-beat exalts the rank of the organism by co-ordinating its functions in a spirit of rhythm. It changes the contracted and fixed action of the muscles for an action flowing over the shoulders and hips and drawing on the spinal column instead of the brain. And every work which can be shifted from the brain to the spine is a mental economy especially needed in these days of excessive mental action and deficient vital action.

Macaire was a great expert in horses, ever to be found where the best thoroughbreds were to be seen, attending races with the most avid relish. And it is well known that hardly anything else is so effective in imparting vitality and courage to a man as the habit of sympathetic contact with horses, looking at them, breathing with them, handling them, driving them. The popular instinct says they give their magnetism to their keepers. The fact is, the vibrations of the blood and nerves of the animal are communicated to those of the man and strengtheningly mix with them. The evil connected with this good is that the companionship often not only imparts vital force and courage but likewise stimulates the coarser animal passions. The tendency, however, is neutralized in the man of refinement.

It was from his friendship with Macaire—attending races, going through stables, visiting armories, drills, and fields of re-

view—that Forrest first learned to feel that keen love for horses which was one of his passions to the end of his life, and first took that intelligent interest in the law of the military drill which gradually grew upon him until he had appropriated its fruits. For the inartistic rudeness of his early gymnastic, his rough circus-tumbling, had left him somewhat stiff and enslaved in parts of his body. But rhythmic movements, regulated by will until they become automatic, free the muscles and joints and give the organism a liberal grace, a generous openness and ease of bearing. A few months after his début in New Orleans the "Advertiser" remarked, "We are happy to be able to say that Mr. E. Forrest now uses his limbs with freedom and grace." The improvement had made itself plain.

The third of the set of comrades grouped about Forrest at this time was Gazonac, one of the most remarkable of the gentlemen gamblers and duellists for whom the Crescent City was famous fifty years ago. Such were the qualities of this smooth, imperturbable, and accomplished man, consummate master of every trick of his art and of every weapon of offence or defence, and such was the tone of popular sentiment in the place, that although gambling was his profession and duelling his diversion he neither had a bad conscience in himself nor was regarded as an outcast by the community. He was a rare judge and adept in everything concerning the physical powers of men, and the expression of their passions in real life under the most concentrated excitements. And he was himself trained to the very nicest possible degree of self-control. His muscular tissue, of the most elastic and tenacious texture, covered him like a garment flowing around his joints as if it had no fastenings, and under it he moved in subtle ease and concealment, allowing no conceivable provocation to extort any signal without consent of his will. His nervous system had been drilled to act with the precision of astronomical clock-work. His conscious calculations had the swiftness and exactitude of the instincts of animals. What he did not know concerning the public sporting life and the secret passionate life of the city was not worth knowing; and he knew it not superficially but through and through. He had fought a dozen duels and always killed his opponent. "How have you invariably come off victor?" Forrest once asked him. "It is

easy enough," he answered, "if one is but complete master of himself, of his weapon, and of the situation, cool as personified mathematics. I always shoot, on an exact calculation, just enough quicker than my adversary for my ball to strike him as he fires, and so disorder his aim."

An absolute social nonchalance in every emergency, a perfect superiority to the fear of our fellow-beings singly or collectively, is attainable only in one of three ways, if we omit idiotic insensibility, sheer brute stolidity. First, by ourselves, as it were, impersonating and representing the established standard of judgment, the code by which we and our conduct are to be tested. This is the assured ease of the fashionable leader, the noble, the king. Second, by utterly defying that standard, and ignoring it, substituting for it a personal standard of our own, or the code of some special class of our associates. This is the sang-froid of the gambler, the stony courage of the habituated criminal. He is immovably collected, cool, and brave, in spite of his condemnation by law and morality, because he has displaced from his consciousness the social standard of judgment prevalent around him which he disobeys, and set up in its stead another standard which he obeys. His conscience then does not make a coward of him. Self-poised in what he himself thinks, he is not disturbed by mental reaction on what he imagines other people think. The moment he violates his own conscience or the code which he professes loyalty to, he feels guilty, and to that extent becomes weak and cowardly. The third method of superiority to fear is by conscious and direct obedience to the intrinsic right, the will of God. This is the imperial heroism of the saint and the martyr. Then the supreme code of the universe makes the harmonious conscience indomitably superior to the frowning penalties of all lesser and meaner codes, and no personal enemy, no hostile public opinion, can terrify.

It was partly by the first, chiefly by the second, hardly at all, it is to be feared, by the third, of these methods that Gazonac acquired his marvellous self-possession and marble equilibrium of nerve. But he had it. And the perfected empire of his being in the range of his daily life, his transcendent fearlessness of everything external, his superlative feeling of competency to every occasion, was in itself a rare achievement and an enviable

prize. He had disentangled and freed the fibres of his brain from all imaginative references to the opinions of other persons or to the requirements of any code but the one enthroned in his own bosom. To this imperfect code he was true, and therefore, however wrong and guilty he may have been, in his self-sufficingness he did not suffer the retributions of a bad conscience. He was shielded in the partial insensibility of a defective conscience. If the conscience of a man be pure and expansive enough properly to represent to him the will of God or the whole truth of his duty, then a neglectful superiority to individual censures and to social opinion is an heroic exaltation,which the more it sets other men against him so much the more it shows him to be diviner than they.

Under the guidance of this typical man, who was always scrupulously tender and careful with him, Forrest was initiated into all the mysteries, all the heights and depths, of a world of experience kept veiled and secret from most people. It was a world of dreadful fascinations and volcanic outbreaks, extravagant pleasures and indescribable horrors,—a world whose heroes are apt, as the proverb goes, to die with their boots on. Together they visited cock-pits, race-courses, bar-rooms, gambling-saloons, and every other resort of disorderly passion and disreputable living. And the young actor with his professional eyes drank in many a revelation of human nature uncovered at its deepest places and in its wildest moods. It was a fearful exposure, and he did not escape unscathed, though it seems from his after-life that he was more instructed than he was infected. He never forgot the impression made on him in the cock-pit by the rings of staring visages, tier above tier, massed in frenzied eagerness and regularly vibrating with the struggles of the feathered and gaffed champions whose untamable ferocity of valor and pluck seemed to satirize the vulgar pride of human battle. Still deeper was the effect on his memory of the scene when, at a race, he saw a vast crowd, including the governor of the State, the mayor of the city, members of Congress, rich planters, leading lawyers and merchants, boatmen, bullies, and loafers, all armed, yet behaving as politely as in a parlor, restrained by the knowledge that at the slightest insult knives would gleam, pistols crack, blood flow, and no one could foretell where the fray would end.

On one occasion, taking a swim with Gazonac in Lake Pontchartrain, Forrest saw a thick-set and commanding sort of man, with flashing black eyes, his breast scarred all over with stabs. "Who is that?" he asked. "It is Lafitte, the pirate," his comrade replied. A week or two afterwards, he saw Lafitte, in the square fronting the cathedral, running like a deer, chased by a man with a knife. Gazonac said, "Oh, on the quarter-deck, with his myrmidons around him, he could play the hero; but he was not a brave man. Some men can fight in crowds but cannot fight singly. This requires courage." He then proceeded to relate some examples of single-handed fights. Two friends of his fought a duel on this wise. They were locked in a room in the dark, naked, each having a knife. In the morning they were found dead in a bloody heap, cut almost into strips. A man who can foresee such a result yet go resolutely into it is no coward, Gazonac said.

Two others fought thus. They were to begin with rifles at three hundred paces; if these failed, advance with pistols; and, these failing, close with knives. At the first shot both dropped dead: the bullet of one struck exactly between the eyes, that of the other pierced the pit of the stomach.

In still another case, two men of his acquaintance were addressing the same woman, and were very jealous of each other. At an offensive remark of one the other said, "I will take your right eye for that!" "Will you?" was the retort, which was scarcely spoken before his enemy had gouged the eye from his head and politely handed it to him. He quietly replied, "I thank you," and put the palpitating orb in his pocket. Then, regardless of the streaming socket and the agony, with the ferocity and swiftness of a tiger he turned on his remorseless mutilator and with one stroke of a long and heavy knife nearly severed his head from his body, and dilated above him shuddering with revengeful joy.

Besides listening to innumerable descriptions of this sort, nearly as vivid as sight itself, Forrest actually saw many terrible quarrels and several fatal fights. And the convulsive exhibitions of human passion and energy in their elemental rawness thus afforded were recorded in his imagination and reproduced in the most sensational of his poses and bursts. That he should be,

under such a training, melodramatic sometimes, whatever else he added, was inevitable. His school was naturalistic and appalling. Even when he attained to so much that was finer and higher, some portion of this still clung to him. He had, it must be remembered, no academic advantages and no tutor, but was a child of nature.

The fourth member of the Forrest group in New Orleans was Charles Graham, captain of a steamer on the Mississippi. He was originally a flatboatman, and was not only familiar with the traditions of the river and the rude border-life concentrated on its current for so many years, but well represented it all in himself. He was widely known among all classes, and especially was such a favorite with the boatmen as to be a sort of a king over them. Though of a kind heart, he was not incapable of taking a frightful revenge when wronged or provoked. One of his men having been abused in a house of disreputable women, he fastened a cable around a large wooden pier on which the house rested, and, starting his steamer, pulled the house over into the river and drowned the whole obscene gang, then proceeded on his way as if nothing had happened.

Such were the typical men in that half-barbaric and reckless civilization. And it was by his intimacy with them at the most plastic period of his life that Forrest so completely absorbed and stood for the most distinctive Americanism of half a century ago. Graham was fond of the drama, and was drawn warmly to Forrest from his first appearance in Jaffier. He used to come to the theatre sometimes with a throng of fifty or even a hundred boatmen in his train. And whenever the actor indulged in his most carnivorous rages then their delight and their applause were the most unbounded. It will be seen that the young tragedian was at that time in a poor school for guiding to artistic delicacy, but in a capital school for developing natural truth and power.

The last of the five friends who were most constantly with Forrest and in one way or another exerted the strongest influences on him was Push-ma-ta-ha, chief of the Choctaw tribe of Indians, who had a liking for the white men and some of their arts and was in the custom of paying long visits to New Orleans. Push-ma-ta-ha was indeed a striking figure and an interesting character. He was in the bloom of opening manhood, erect as

a column, graceful and sinewy as a stag, with eyes of piercing brilliancy, a voice of guttural music like gurgling waters, the motions of his limbs as easy and darting as those of a squirrel. His muscular tissue in its tremulous quickness seemed made of woven lightnings. His hair was long, fine, and thick, and of the glossiest blackness; his skin, mantled with blood, was of the color of ruddy gold, and his form one of faultless proportions. A genuine friendship grew up between this chief and Forrest, not without some touch of simple romance, and leading, as we shall see, to lasting results in the life of the latter.

Push-ma-ta-ha was a natural orator of a high order. He inherited this gift from his father, for whom he had a superstitious veneration, claiming that the Great Spirit had created him without human intervention. Whether this idea had been implanted in him in his childhood by some medicine-man, or was a poetic pretence of his own, Forrest could not tell. The elder chief died in Washington, where he was tarrying with a deputation. His dying words to his comrades are a fine specimen of his eloquence; "I shall die, but you will return to our brethren. As you go along the paths, you will see the flowers and hear the birds sing, but Push-ma-ta-ha will see them and hear them no more. When you shall come to your home, they will ask you, Where is Push-ma-ta-ha? And you will say to them, He is no more. They will hear the tidings like the sound of the fall of a mighty oak in the stillness of the woods."

The North American Indian seen from afar is a picturesque object. When we contemplate him in the vista of history, retreating, dwindling, soon to vanish before the encroachments of our stronger race, he is not without mystery and pathos. But studied more nearly, inspected critically in the detail of his character and habits, the charm for the most part disappears and is replaced with repulsion. The freedom of savages from the diseased vices of a luxurious society, the proud beauty of their free bearing, the relish of their wild liberty with nature, exempt from the artificial burdens and trammels of our complicated and stifling civilization, appeal to the imagination. Poetical writers accordingly have idealized the Indian and set him off in a romantic light, forgetting that savage life has its own vices, degradations, and hardships. Cooper, the novelist, paints Indian life as a series

of attractive scenes and adventures, full of royal traits. Palfrey, the historian, describes it as cheap, tawdry, nasty, and horrid. There is truth, no doubt, in both aspects of the case; but the artist naturally selects the favorable point of view, and the dramatist impersonating a barbaric chieftain very properly tries to emphasize his virtues and grandeur, leaving his meanness and squalor in shadow. It is truth of history that the American Indian had noble and great qualities. His local attachment, tribal patriotism, and sensitiveness to public opinion, were as deep and strong, and produced as high examples of bravery and self-sacrifice, as were ever shown in Greece or Rome, Switzerland or Scotland. Nothing of the kind ever surpassed his haughty taciturnity and indomitable fortitude. And if his spirit of revenge was infernal in the level of its quality, it was certainly sublime in the intensity and volume of its power. Although in richness of mental equipment and experience there can be no comparison between them, yet if we had the data for a series of complete parallels and portraits; it would be extremely instructive to confront Philip of Pokanoket with Philip of Macedon, Push-ma-ta-ha with Alcibiades, Tecumseh with Attila, and Osceola with Spartacus. In kinds of passion, in modes of thought, in styles of natural and social scenery, in varieties of pleasure and pain, what correspondences and what contrasts there would be!

The acquaintance of Forrest with Push-ma-ta-ha was the first cause of his deep interest in the subject of the American Aborigines, of his subsequent extensive researches into their history, and finally of his offering a prize for a play which should embody a representative idea of their genius and their fate.

However wild and questionable in a moral point of view were some of Forrest's closest friends in New Orleans, and freely as he himself indulged in pleasure, he shed the worst influences exerted on him, was never recklessly abandoned to any vice whatever, but held a strong curb over his passions, and was uniformly faithful and punctual in the extreme to all his professional duties, steadily working in every way he knew to improve and to rise. And he owed in several respects an immense debt to these friends. For, stimulated by the sight of their superb poise, courage, and exuberant fulness of animal life and passion, he took them as models, and labored with unflagging patience by a care-

ful hygiene and gymnastic and critical self-control to fortify his weak places and lift his constitutional vitality and confidence to the highest point. He was temperate in food and drink, scrupulous as to rest and sleep, abundant in bathing, manipulation, and athletics. His development was steady, and he became in a certain personal centrality of balance, an assured and massive authority of bearing, unquestionably one of the most pronounced and imposing men on the continent.

Nor, in that remote situation, in those tempted days, did he forget his distant home, with the humble and repulsive hardships pressing on the dear ones within it. He wrote to them affectionately, cheering them up, sending them such small remittances as he could afford, and promising larger ones in the future. With the very first money he received from Caldwell, after paying his landlady, he purchased and forwarded by ship to his mother a barrel of flour, a half-barrel of sugar, and a box of oranges. His youngest sister, in the last year of her life, described the scene in their home when these things arrived. She was out of the house on an errand when they came. Entering the door, there sat her mother weeping for joy, with an open letter in her hand. Caroline stood with her bonnet on, just starting to take a dish of oranges to one of their neighbors, and Henrietta rushed forward, crying, "Oh, Eleanora, here is something from our dear Edwin!"

One evening, near the close of the season, Forrest had made so great a sensation in the audience that they stamped, clapped, shouted, and insisted on his coming before the curtain to receive their plaudits. But he had left the theatre in haste to fulfil an appointment elsewhere, and knew not of the honor designed for him. The people, ignorant of his absence, were furious at what they chose to interpret as his want of respect for them. They vowed vengeance. His benefit was to come off a few nights later. It was whispered abroad that the audience would not suffer him to perform unless he offered a meek apology for his insolent disregard of their wishes. He determined that he would not apologize, and that he would act. His friends, already described, with a good number of trusty followers, each a match for ten untrained men in a fight, were on hand, resolved to protect him, and, as they phrased it, to put him through. As the curtain rose and the youthful actor stepped forward, he was greeted with

a shower of hisses, mixed with cries of "Apology! Apology!" It was the first experience of the kind he had ever known, and he felt for an instant that horripilating chill called *gooseflesh* creep over some parts of his skin. But, nothing daunted, he at once, in the fixed attitude he had assumed, turned his level eyes on the noisy crowd, and said, in a calm, clear voice, "Gentlemen, not being guilty of any offence, I shall make no apology. When you called me, I was out of hearing. Is it just to punish me for a fault of which I am innocent?" A perfect hush followed, and in a moment the changed temper of the audience declared itself in a unanimous cheer, and the play went swimmingly on to the close.

Soon after the theatre had closed for the summer, about the middle of June, Forrest was attacked by the dreadful fever to which the city was periodically exposed. The low state of his finances caused him to dwell in a malarious quarter near the river, and to stay there at a time when the city was largely deserted by the better classes. It was the first severe and serious illness he had suffered. His best friends were away. He could not afford to hire special attendance. The disease raged terribly. His pain was extreme, and his depression worse. He thought he should die; and then bitterly he lamented that he had ever left his home, to perish in this awful way among strangers. "And yet," he said, "I meant it for the best; and what else could I do? Oh, my mother, where are you? How little you imagine the condition your poor boy is in now!" In his delirium he raved continually about his mother, and sometimes fancied she was with him, and lavished endearing epithets on her. So they told him after his recovery.

When he had been confined twelve or fourteen days, left alone one afternoon, he managed to get on his clothes and crawl into the open air. He was a most forlorn and miserable wretch, emaciated, trembling, with a nauseous stomach and a reeling brain. The scene without was in full keeping with his feelings. The squares were empty and silent. The grass was growing in the deserted street. The air was thick, lurid, and quivering with a sickly heat, while to his distempered fancy, through the steamy haze above, the sun seemed to hang like a great yellow scab. At that moment a crocodile five or six feet long crept up in the

gutter, and stared stupidly at him with its glazed and devilish eyes. Horrified, he shook his fist with a feeble cry at the ominous apparition, and the giant reptile waddled slowly away. He sat down on the curb-stone, faint and despairing, when who should come along but his good friend Captain Graham, just then landed at the wharf a few rods below! Gazing with astonishment at the haggard wreck before him, the captain exclaimed, "Why, good God, my boy, is that you?" "Yes," gasped the poor fellow, piteously, "this is all there is left of Edwin Forrest." The captain lifted him up and almost carried him to his boat, laid him on his own bed in the cabin, had him carefully sponged all over, first with warm water, finally with brandy, then gave him a heavy dose of raw whiskey. This acted as a benign emetic, and greatly relieved him. He fell asleep, and slept sweetly all night. The next day he returned to his lodgings convalescent. And in about three weeks he was well enough to start off with Caldwell and a part of his company on a theatrical tour through Virginia. The following letter tells us how he was then, and what he was doing:

"PETERSBURG, July 26th, 1824.

"BELOVED MOTHER,—I must indeed beg ten thousand pardons for not writing to you earlier. Although we are separated, think not you are forgotten by me. Oh, no, dear mother, you are ever in my memory, and your happiness is my greatest wish. I hope, my dear mother, in the course of three or four weeks, to be with you on a visit of a fortnight or so, but must then return here to perform at Richmond and Norfolk. I sincerely desire that this vacation may occur. Then I shall see you; and I assure you such a meeting will be as great a happiness as I can possess in this world.

"I hope all the family have enjoyed full health since you last wrote. For myself, I have not altogether been myself since the severe attack of the fever which I had previous to leaving New Orleans. Well, well, I am in hopes I shall mend shortly and be myself again. The country I am now in is delightful, and the climate far more agreeable to me than that of the South. Please inform me of every little circumstance that has happened lately. How are my dear sisters? Also, where is my dear brother Lor-

man, of whom I have heard nothing for some time? Dear mother, it will relieve me much if you can give me any information concerning him.

"How does the old firm of John R. Baker, Son and—no, not clerk now! But is it still in existence? Should you see Max Stevenson, ask him whether he received my letter. Make my best regards to Sam Fisher, not forgetting the worthy Levan. Where are Joe Shipley, Charley Scriver, and Blighden Van Bann? I have not heard from them lately. Likewise give me all the information you can respecting the theatres.

"Have you seen Mrs. Page? Mother, she is indeed an excellent lady, one who merits every attention and regard; and I am sure your ever-friendly and social feelings towards her will not be lessened when you know that it will give infinite satisfaction to your wild but truly affectionate son,

"EDWIN FORREST."

His anticipations of visiting home were doomed to disappointment. In a letter to his mother, dated at Fredericksburg, September 29th, we find him saying that he had been acting every night, except Sundays, and that there was no prospect of an intermission. He adds, "I performed Pythias for my opening here, and have succeeded to the delight of all the inhabitants. I had some difficulty with the manager again. He cast me, as an opening part, in Mortimer in the comedy of Laugh When You Can. I refused to play it, and left the theatre. However, in two days I saw my name in the bill for Pythias, and resumed my situation. All has gone on smoothly since, and I have triumphed over him as a tragedian in the opinions of those who recently esteemed him above praise or censure.

"As I passed through Washington on the way here, I had the satisfaction of seeing the worthy old Philadelphia manager, Warren. He expressed considerable surprise and pleasure when I introduced myself to him; for I had changed and grown entirely out of his memory."

During this trip in Virginia, Forrest saw Chief-Justice Marshall in a scene which always remained as a distinct picture in his memory. The illustrious magistrate was stopping at a country inn in the course of his circuit. The landlady was trying to

catch a hen to roast for dinner. The feat proving rather difficult for the aged and corpulent hostess, the Chief Justice came forth to aid her. There he stood, bare-headed, his vast silver shoe-buckles shining in the sun, a close body-coat and a pair of tight velvet breeches revealing his spare and sinewy form, striving to scare the refractory fowls into the hen-coop, awkwardly waving his hands towards them and crying, "Shoo! Shoo! Shoo!"

A few weeks later, Marshall went to the theatre in Richmond. It was the only time he had ever visited such a place. On invitation of Manager Caldwell, he went behind the scenes, examined the machinery and properties with great interest, and revealed his curiosity and naïveté in such questions, Forrest said, as a bright and innocent boy of sixteen might have asked. In recalling the incident when forty-five years had passed, Forrest remarked that nearly every great man had a good deal of the boy in him, but that Marshall showed the most of it, in his child-like simplicity and frankness, of all the great men he had ever known. Yes, those were simple times, times of high character and modest living, the purity of the early Republic. And if the above anecdote makes us smile, it also makes us love the stainless friend of Washington, the great Justice whose ermine was never soiled even by so much as a speck of suspicion.

While at Richmond, and again subsequently at New Orleans, Forrest had the felicity of seeing La Fayette, also of playing before him and winning his applause. The triumphal progress through America of this beloved hero of two hemispheres was a proud recollection to all who shared in it. It was a thrilling poem in action instead of words. The enthusiasm was something which we in our more broken and cynical times can hardly conceive. From town to town, from city to city, from State to State, whole populations turned out to meet him, with bells, guns, popular songs, garlands of flowers in the hands of school-children; and he moved on beneath a canopy of banners amidst swelling music, accompanied by the prayers and tears of the grateful people whom he had befriended in the midnight of their struggle, and who idolized him now that he had come back to bask in the noonday of their glory. It was one of the most charming episodes in history, and one which no American heart can afford to forget. Yet in this mixed world the sublime and the

ridiculous are usually near together. It was so in this case in an incident which came under the personal observation of Forrest. He stood near to La Fayette on one occasion when a long series of citizens were introduced to him. Of course it became a wearisome formality to the illustrious guest, who bore it with smiling fortitude by dint of converting it into an automatic performance. As he shook hands first with one, then with another, he would say, "Are you married?" If the reply was "Yes," he would add, "Happy man!" If the reply was "No," still he would add, as before, "Happy man!"

Caldwell re-opened at the American Theatre January 3d, 1825, in The Soldier's Daughter, Forrest taking the rôle of Malfort Junior. During the month he played, among other parts, Adrian in the comedy of Adrian and Orilla, Master of Ceremonies in Tom and Jerry, Joseph Surface in the School for Scandal. The "Louisiana Advertiser" says, in a notice of The Falls of Clyde, "Nothing could be more to our taste than the wild music and dramatized legends of Scotland. Mr. E. Forrest never appeared to so much advantage. Every person applauded him." Some weeks later the same paper remarks, "Mr. Forrest's Almanza is well conceived, and displays great genius."

At this period of his life Forrest was in the habit of writing verses whenever his heart was particularly touched. Quite a number of his effusions, mostly of an amatory cast, were published in the corner of a New Orleans newspaper. A diligent search has brought them to light, together with the fact that the lady to whom the most of them were addressed is yet living in that city, the widow of one of its most influential and wealthy merchants, and that she remembers well her girlish admiration for the handsome young tragedian, and still preserves in manuscript several letters and poems sent to her by him. In his latter days he himself gave the following account of this slight literary episode. "In my youth," he said, "I used to write poetry; that is, as I should say, doggerel. The editor of the 'Louisiana Advertiser' printed it, and encouraged me to compose more. I used to read it over and think it very fine. But after a few years I looked at the pieces again, and was mortified at their worthlessness. Glancing around furtively to see if any one was observing me, I rushed the whole collection into the fire. Oh, it

was wretched stuff, infernally poor stuff! Moses Y. Scott satirized my poetry in some lines beginning,—

> 'With paces long and sometimes scanty,
> Thus he rides on with Rosinante!'"

A selection of three of the better among these pieces will suffice to satisfy curiosity; and it is to be feared that after perusing them the judgment of the reader will accord with that of Moses Y. Scott.

TO ——.

"Thy spell, O Love, is elysium to my soul;
Freely I yield me to thy sweet control;
For other joys let folly's fools contend,
Whether to pomp or luxury they tend.
Let sages tell us, what they ne'er believe,
That love must ever give us cause to grieve;
Mine be the bliss C——'s love to prove,
To love her still, and still to have her love.
If without her of countless worlds possessed,
I still should mourn, I still should be unblest.
For her I'd yield whole worlds of richest ore,—
Possessed of her, the gods could give no more.
For her, though Paradise itself were given,
I'd love her still, nor seek another heaven."

TO MISS S—— ON HER LEAVING TOWN.

"Ah, go not hence, light of my saddened soul!
Nor leave me in this absence to lament;
Thy going sheds dark chaos o'er the whole,—
A noonday night from angry Heaven sent.

"Ah, go not where, now tow'ring to the skies,
Malignant hills to separate us rise;
For should those smiling eyes, attemp'ring every ray,
That now shine sweetly, lambent with celestial day,
Averted from me e'er on distant objects roll,
Melancholy's deep shade would shroud my lifeless soul.

"Oh, stay thine eyes,—diffuse their animating ray,—
And with their smiling pleasures brighten all the day.
But if relentless 'gainst me with the fates you join,
Then go! though still my heart, my soul, is thine.
And when from me so distant thou art gone,
Oh, yield one sigh responsive to mine own!"

The third piece was composed on occasion of the military funeral of Henry K. Bunting, an intimate friend of Forrest, a young man of most estimable character, whose early death was lamented by the whole community:

"How slow they marched! each youthful face was pale,
And downcast eyes disclosed the mournful tale;
Grief was depicted on each manly brow,
And gloomy tears abundantly did flow
From each sad heart. For he whose breath had fled
Was loved by all,—in honor's path was bred.
I knew him well; his heart was pure and kind,
A noble spirit, and a lofty mind.
Virtue cast round his head her smiling wreath,
Which did not leave him on his bed of death.
His image lives, and from my grief-worn heart,
While life remains, will never, never part.
Weep, soldiers, weep! with tears of sadness lave
Your friend and brother's drear, untimely grave!"

In March the celebrated and ill-starred Conway filled an engagement in New Orleans. The witnessing of his performances formed one of the epochs in the development of Forrest's dramatic power. He played Malcolm to the Macbeth of the tall and over-impassioned tragedian, and caught some valuable suggestions from his idiomatic individuality and style. But it was the Othello of this powerful and unhappy actor which most impressed him. He played this part with a sweetness and a majestic and frenzied energy which no audience could resist. The whole truth of the course of the ambition, love, jealousy, madness, vengeance, desperation, remorse, and death of the noble but barbaric Moor was painted in volcanic and statuesque outlines. Nothing escaped the apt pupil, who with lynx-eyed observation fastened on every original point, every electric stroke, and at this adolescent period drank in the significance of the fully-developed passions of unbridled human nature. It was not long after these mimic presentments when the real passions in the darkly-tangled plot of his own existence wrought so convulsively on poor Conway, the friction sunk so profoundly into the sockets and vital seats of his being, that he went mad, threw himself overboard, and all his griefs and fears at once in the deep bosom of the ocean buried.

Early in May, Forrest's benefit was announced, and he was underlined for Lear, "the first time in New Orleans." On account of bad weather the benefit was postponed, and, when it did occur, instead of Lear he performed Octavian, in Coleman's Mountaineers. The season closed with the end of the month, when he played Carwin, the leading rôle in the drama of Therese, by John Howard Payne.

The first actress in the company of the American Theatre at New Orleans for the season of 1825 was Miss Jane Placide. She was born at Charleston, and was then, in her twentieth year, deservedly a great favorite with the Southern public. She was extremely beautiful in her person, sweet in her disposition, piquant in her manners, and artistically natural in her rôles. Among the many private suppliants for her smiles rumor included both Caldwell and Forrest. Where the tinder of such rivalry is lying about, flashes of jealousy, easily provoked, may at any time elicit an explosion of wrath. So it happened here, and the two men had a sharp quarrel. The young actor challenged the calmer manager. He refused to accept it, saying their altercation was an inconsiderate effervescence which had better be forgotten by them both. But the temper of Forrest, aggravated by his hot associates and the local code, was not so cheaply to be assuaged. He had the following card printed and affixed in several conspicuous places: "Whereas James H. Caldwell has wronged and insulted me, and refused me the satisfaction of a gentleman, I hereby denounce him as a scoundrel and post him as a coward. Edwin Forrest."

Caldwell, so far from being enraged at this sonorous manifesto, laughed at it, quietly adding, "Like the Parthian, he wounds me as he flies." For in the afternoon of the very day of his issuing the ominous placard, Forrest had accepted an invitation from his friend Push-ma-ta-ha to spend a month with him in the wigwams and hunting-grounds of his tribe; and already, side by side, on horseback, each with a little pack at his saddle, they were scampering away towards the tents of the Choctaws, a hundred miles distant. Three reasons urged him to this interesting adventure. First, he loved his friend, the young Indian chief, and longed to see him in his glory at the head of his people. Secondly, he was poor, and there it would cost him nothing for food and lodgings.

And thirdly, he desired to make a personal study of Indian character, life, and manners.

The red men treated him, as the friend and guest of their chief, with marked distinction, making him quickly feel himself at home. He adapted himself to their habits, dressed in their costume, and, as far as he could, took part in all their doings, their smokes, their dances, their hunts, their songs. Their rude customs were not offensive but rather attractive to him, and he was happy, feeling that it would not be hard for him to relapse from civilization and stay permanently with these wild step-children of nature. He seemed to come into contact with the unwritten traditions of the prehistoric time, and to taste the simple freedom that prevailed before so many artificial luxuries, toils, and laws had made such slaves of us all. The fine chance here offered him of getting an accurate knowledge of the American Indian, alike in his exterior and his interior personality, he carefully improved, and when he came to enact the part of Metamora it stood him in good stead.

One night Push-ma-ta-ha and Forrest were lying on the ground before a big fire which they had kindled a little way out from the village. They had been conversing for hours, recalling stories and legends for their mutual entertainment. The shadows of the wood lay here and there like so many dark ghosts of trees prostrate and intangible on the earth. The pale smoke from their burning heap of brush floated towards heaven in spectral volumes and slowly faded out afar. In the unapproachable blue over their heads hung the full moon, and in the pauses of their talk nothing but the lonely notes of a night-bird broke the silence. Like an artist, or like an antique Greek, Forrest had a keen delight in the naked form of man, feeling that the best image of God we have is nude humanity in its perfection, which our fashionable dresses so travesty and degrade. Push-ma-ta-ha, then twenty-four years old, brought up from his birth in the open air and in almost incessant action of sport and command, was from head to foot a faultless model of a human being. Forrest asked him to strip himself and walk to and fro before him between the moonlight and the firelight, that he might feast his eyes and his soul on so complete a physical type of what man should be. The young chief, without a word, cast aside his

Choctaw garb and stepped forth with dainty tread, a living statue of Apollo in glowing bronze. "Push-ma-ta-ha," said Forrest, in wondering admiration, "who were your grandparents?" His nostrils curled with a superbly beautiful disdain, and, stretching forth his arm with a lofty grace which the proudest Roman orator could not have surpassed, he replied, "My father was never born. The Great Spirit shivered an oak with one of his thunderbolts, and my father came out, a perfect man, with his bow and arrows in his hand!"

Whether this was superstitious inspiration or theatrical brag on the part of the Indian, certainly the scene was a weird and wonderful one, and the speech extremely poetic. Forrest used in after-years to say, "My God, what a contrast he was to some fashionable men I have since seen, half made up of false teeth, false hair, padding, gloves, and spectacles!"

But a sense of duty, in a few weeks, urged the actor to be seeking an engagement for the next season, and, saying good-by forever to his aboriginal comrades, he returned to New Orleans and took passage in a small coasting-vessel for Philadelphia, where he arrived with a single notable adventure by the way. For on the third day out they were becalmed; and, suffering from the excessive heat, he thought to refresh himself by a swim. With a joyous shout and splash he sprang from the taffrail, and swam several times around the sloop, when, chancing to look down and a little way behind, he saw a huge shark making towards him. Three or four swift and tremendous strokes brought him within reach of the anchor-chain, and he convulsively swung himself on deck, and lay there panting with exhaustion. But the ruling passion was strong even then. He immediately went over and over in consciousness, in order to fix them in memory for future use in his art, the frightful emotions he had felt while chased by this white-tusked devil of the ocean!

CHAPTER VII.

BREAKING THE WAY TO FAME AND FORTUNE.

One morning, early in August, 1825, a young man of fine figure and stately bearing, with bright dark-brown eyes, raven hair, and a clear, firm complexion like veined marble, approached the door of a modest house in Cedar Street, Philadelphia. Without knocking, he entered quickly. "Mother! Henrietta!" he cried, springing towards them with open arms. "Gracious Heaven, Edwin!" they exclaimed, "is it possible that this is you, changed so much and grown so tall?" "Yes, mother," he said, "Heaven has indeed been gracious to me; and here I am once more with you, after three years of strolling and struggling among strangers. Here I am, with a light pocket but a stout heart. I shall be something yet, mother; and then the first thing I am resolved to do is to make you and the girls independent, so far as the goods of this world go."

He had firm grounds for his confidence, as the sequel showed, though many dark days of hope deferred were yet to put his mettle to the proof. He was in his twentieth year, and his reputation had not reached much beyond the local centres where he had gained it. But it was plainly beginning to spread. Even his friendliest admirers had not the prescience to discern the signs of that vast success which was to make him a continental celebrity; but he knew better than they the fervor of his ambition and the strength of the motives that fed it, and he felt the consciousness of a latent power which justified him in sanguine dreams for the future. His intuitive perception had interpreted better than the critics or his friends the revelation and prophecy contained in the effects he had already often produced on his audiences. He knew very well himself that which it needed fame to make the public consciously recognize. That fame he not only expected, but was resolved to win.

In the autumn he succeeded in securing an engagement on moderate terms at the theatre in Albany, then under the management of a shrewd, capable, but eccentric Dutchman, Charles Gilfert. He was to play leading parts in the stock company, and second parts to stars. Albany, as the capital of the State of New York, during the theatrical season was thronged with cultivated and distinguished people, and was an excellent place for a dramatic aspirant to achieve and extend a reputation. Forrest began with good heart and zeal, and, without any sudden or brilliant success, received sufficient encouragement to increase his confidence and keep him progressing. He took great pains to perfect his physical development, exercising his voice in declamation, practising gestures, and every night and morning taking a thorough sponge-bath, followed by vigorous friction with coarse towels. Immediately after his morning ablutions he always devoted a half-hour to gymnastics,—using dumb-bells, springing, attitudinizing, and walking two or three times about the room on his hands. One of the most distinguished philosophical writers of our country, who was a native of Albany and at that time a particular friend of Forrest, has recently been heard to describe with great animation the pleasure he used to take in visiting the actor at this early hour of the morning to see him go through his gymnastic performances. The metaphysician said he admired the enormous strength displayed by the player, and applauded his fidelity to the conditions for preserving and increasing it, though for his own part he never could bring himself to do anything of the kind.

Nothing occurred through the winter out of the ordinary routine, except his happy and most profitable intercourse with Edmund Kean, during the last engagement filled in Albany by that illustrious actor and unfortunate man. This encounter was of so much consequence to Forrest that we must pause a little over it. It will be recollected that he had, several years before, seen Kean perform a few nights in Philadelphia, and that he was filled with enthusiasm about him. But now the discipline and experience of five added years fitted him far more worthily to appreciate the genius and to profit from the startling methods and points of the tragedian whom many judges declare to have been the most original and electrifying actor that has ever stepped before the foot-lights.

Edmund Kean, born under the ban of society, treated as a dog, beaten, starved, while yet an infant flung for a livelihood on his wits and tricks as a public performer, associating mostly with vagrants and adventurers, but occasionally with the best and highest, early became a wonder both in the elastic strength of his small body and in the penetrative power of his flashing mind. With sensibilities of extreme delicacy and passions of terrific energy he combined a natural and sedulously-cultivated ability of giving to the outer signs of inner states their utmost possible distinctness and intensity. Perhaps there never was, within his range, a greater master of the physiological language of the soul, one who set facial expression in more vivid relief. As a student of his art he went to no traditional school of posture, no frigid school of elocution, but to the original school of nature in the burning depths of his own mind and heart.

His direct observations of other men, and his reflex researches on himself in his impassioned probationary assumptions of characters, struck to the automatic centres of his being, the seats of those intuitions which are historic humanity epitomized in the individual, or the spirit of nature itself inspiring man. And when he acted there was something so unitary and elemental in the unconscious depths from which his revelations seemed to break in spontaneous thunderbolts that sensitive auditors were filled with awe, utterly overwhelmed and carried away from themselves. Coleridge said that seeing him act Macbeth was like reading the play by flashes of lightning. In his most impassioned moods his voice suggested, by the tense intermittent vibration of his whole resonant frame revealed in it, the frenzied energy of a tiger. He spoke then in a stammering staccato of spasmodic outbursts which shook others because they threatened to shatter him. After years of maddening scorn, poverty, drudgery, neglect, he vaulted at one bound, with his first appearance as Shylock on the stage of Drury Lane, into an almost fabulous popularity, courted and fêted by the proudest in the land, and reaping an income of over fifty thousand dollars a year. No wonder he grew wild, reeling with all sorts of intoxication between the throne of the scenic king and the den of the ungirt debauchee.

The essential peculiarity of Kean's greatness in his greatest

effects was that his acting was then no effort of will, no trick or art of calculation, but nature itself uncovered and set free in its deepest intensity of power, just on the edge, sometimes quite over the verge, of madness. He penetrated and incorporated himself with the characters he represented until he possessed them so completely that they possessed him, and their performance was not simulation but revelation. He brought the truth and simplicity of nature to the stage, but nature in her most intensified degrees. His playing was a manifestation of the inspired intuitions, infallibly true and irresistibly sensational. It came not from the surfaces of his brain, but from the very centres of his nervous system, and suggested something portentous, preternatural, supernal, that blinded and stunned the beholders, appalled their imagination, and chilled their blood. This same curdling automatic touch Lucius Junius Brutus Booth also had; but it is asserted that he was first led to it by imitating Kean.

At the time of his engagement in Albany, Kean was much marred and broken from his best estate by his bad habits. The intoxication of fame, the intoxication of love, and the dismal intoxication of stimulants snatched to keep his jaded faculties at their height, had done their sad work on him. Still, the habitudes of his genius lingered fascinatingly with him, and he delivered his climacteric points with almost undiminished power, between the cloudy intervals of his weariness striking lightning and eliciting universal shocks.

Nothing could have been more fortunate for Forrest, just at that time, than to watch such an actor in his greatest parts and come into confidential contact with him. In playing Iago to his Othello, Titus to his Brutus, Richmond to his Richard, the best chance was afforded for this. About noon of the day they were to act together, as Kean did not come to the rehearsal, Forrest called at his hotel and asked to see him. He told the messenger to say to Mr. Kean that the young man who was to play Iago wished a brief interview with him, to receive any directions he might like to give for the performance in the evening. "Show him up," said the actor, graciously. As Forrest entered, with a beating heart, Kean rose and welcomed him with great kindness of manner. In answer to a question as to the business of the play, he said, "My boy, I do not care how you come on or go

off, if while we are on the stage you always keep in front of me and let not your attention wander from me." He had not yet breakfasted, late as it was, but was in a loose dressing-gown, with the marks of excessive indulgence in dissipation and sleepless hours too plainly revealed in his whole appearance. A rosewood piano was covered with spilth and sticky rings from the glasses used in the debauch of the night. "Have you ever heard me sing?" asked Kean. "Oh, yes, in Tom Tug the Waterman." "Did you see my Tom Tug?" responded the actor, in a pleased tone of caressing eagerness. "I learned those songs purely by imitation of my old friend Incledon; and I approached him so closely that it was said no one could tell the singing of one of us from that of the other. But now you shall hear me sing my favorite piece." He sat down at the piano, struck a few notes, and sang the well-known song of Moore, "Farewell, but whenever you welcome the hour." His face was very pale, and wore an expression of unutterable pathos and melancholy; his hair was floating in confused masses, and his eyes looked like two great inland seas. Both he and his auditor wept as he sang with matchless depth of feeling and a most mournful sweetness,—

> "Let fate do her worst, there are relics of joy,
> Bright dreams of the past, which she cannot destroy,
> Which come in the night-time of sorrow and care
> And bring back the features that joy used to wear.
> Long, long be my heart with such memories filled!
> Like the vase in which roses have once been distilled,—
> You may break, you may ruin the vase, if you will,
> But the scent of the roses will hang round it still."

While he thus sang, he was, to the fancy of his moved and admiring listener, himself the vase broken and ruined, and his genius, still blooming over the ruins of the man, distilled its holy perfume around him.

The Othello of Kean was his unapproachable masterpiece, crowded with electric effects in detail and crowned with a masterly originality as a whole. It left its general stamp ineffaceably on the young actor who that night confronted it with his Iago in such a manner as to win not only the vehement applause of the house but likewise the warm approval of the Othello himself. Forrest had carefully studied the character of Iago in the inde-

pendent light of what he knew of human nature. And he conceived the part in what was then quite an original reading of it. The current Iago of the stage was a sullen and sombre villain, as full of gloom as of hate, and with such sinister manners and malignant bearing as made his diabolical spirit and purposes perfectly obvious. One must be a simpleton to be deceived by such a style of man. A man like Othello, accustomed to command, moving for many years among all sorts of men in peace and war, could be so played on only by a most accomplished master of the arts of hypocrisy. Forrest accordingly represented Iago as a gay and dashing fellow on the outside, hiding his malice and treachery under the signs of a careless honesty and jovial good humor. One point, strictly original, he made which powerfully affected Kean. Iago, while working insidiously on the suspicions of Othello, says to him,—

> "Look to your wife; observe her well with Cassio;
> Wear your eye thus, not jealous,—nor secure."

All these words, except the last two, Forrest uttered in a frank and easy fashion; but suddenly, as if the intensity of his underknowledge of evil had automatically broken through the good-natured part he was playing on the surface and betrayed his secret in spite of his will, he spoke the words *nor secure* in a husky tone, sliding down from a high pitch and ending in a whispered horror. The fearful suggestiveness of this produced from Kean a reaction so truly artistic and tremendous that the whole house was electrified. As they met in the dressing-room, Kean said, excitedly, "In the name of God, boy, where did you get that?" Forrest replied, "It is something of my own." "Well," said he, while his auditor trembled with pleasure, "everybody who speaks the part hereafter must do it just so."

There must, from all accounts, have been something supernaturally sweet and sorrowful, an unearthly intensity of plaintive and majestic pathos, in the manner in which Kean delivered the farewell of Othello. The critics, Hazlitt, Procter, Lamb, and the rest, all agree in this. They say, "the mournful melody of his voice came over the spirit like the desolate moaning of the blast that precedes the thunder-storm." It was like "the hollow and musical murmur of the midnight sea when the tempest has raved

itself to rest." His "tones sunk into the soul like the sighing of the breeze among the strings of an æolian harp or through the branches of a cypress grove." His voice "struck on the heart like the swelling of some divine music laden with the sound of years of departed happiness." The retrospect of triumphant exultation, the lingering sense of delight, the big shocks of sudden agony, and the slow blank despair, breathed in a voice elastic and tremulous with vital passion and set off with a by-play of exquisitely artistic realism, made up a whole of melancholy beauty and overwhelming power perhaps never equalled. It was at once an anthem, a charge, and a dirge. Forrest was inexpressibly delighted and thrilled by it, and he did not fail to his dying day to speak of it with rapturous admiration.

Kean, both as a man and as an actor, made a fascinating impression on the imagination and heart as well as on the memory of his youthful supporter in the Albany theatre. What he had himself experienced under the influence of this marvellous player, in the profound stirring of his wonder and affection, remained to exalt his estimate of the rank of his professional art and to stimulate still further his personal ambition. This is the way the sensitive soul of genius grows, by assimilating something from every superior ideal exhibited to it. Kean himself, at a public dinner given him in Philadelphia on his return thither from Albany, generously said that he had met one actor in this country, a young man named Edwin Forrest, who gave proofs of a decided genius for his profession, and who would, as he believed, rise to great eminence. This kind act on the part of the veteran was reported to the novice, and sank gratefully into his heart. To be praised by one we admire is such a delight to the affections and such a spur to endeavor that it is a pity the successful are not more ready to give it to the aspiring. Ah, what a heaven this world would be if all the men and women in it were only what in our better hours we dream and wish!

One incident occurred during this season at Albany showing extraordinary character in so young a man. The fearful power of the passion for gaming has been well known in all ages. It has prevailed with equal violence and evil among the rudest savages and in the most luxurious phases of civilization. Every year, at the present time, in the capital centres of Christendom it

explodes in forgeries, murder, and suicides. And we read in the Mahabharata, the great Sanscrit epic written we know not how many centuries before the Christian era, that king Yudishthira was so desperately addicted to gambling that on one occasion he staked his empire, and lost it; then his wife, and lost; finally, his own body, lost that, and became the slave of the winner. In New Orleans Forrest had felt something of the horrid fascination of this passion. He had not, however, indulged much in it, although his friend Gazonac, who stood at the head of the profession, had initiated him pretty thoroughly into the secret tricks of the art.

The company of actors and actresses used often to stay after the play was over and engage in games of chance. Forrest joined them several times. He then steadily refused to do so any more; for he felt that the gambling spirit was getting hold of him. But on a certain evening they urged him so strongly that he consented,—determined to give them a lesson. He said it was a base business, full of dishonest arts by which all but the sharpest adepts could be cheated. They maintained that there were among them neither decoys nor dupes, and they challenged fraud. They played all night, and Forrest at last had won every cent they had with them. He then rose to his feet, and denounced the habit of gaming for profit as utterly pernicious. He recited some examples of the horrors he had known to result from it. He said it demoralized the characters of those who practised it, and, producing nothing, was a robbery, stealing the time, thought, and feeling which might so much better be devoted to something useful. With these words he swept the implements of play into the fire, strewed the money he had won on the floor, left the room, and went home in the gray light of the morning,—and never gambled again from that hour unto the day of his death.

May 16th, 1826, Forrest made his first re-appearance on the stage of his native city. It was on the occasion of a benefit given to his old friend Charles S. Porter, manager of the theatre, it will be remembered, in which he made his début as Rosalia de Borgia. He took the part of Jaffier in Venice Preserved. His success was flattering and complete. The leading journal of the city said, "He left us a boy, and has returned a man. The talents he then exhibited, improved by attention and study, now display

themselves in the excellence of his delineation. He is by no means what he was when he left us. His delivery, attitudes, and gesture are similar to those of Conway; and he could not have chosen a better model. Just in his conception of his part, clear and correct in his utterance, graceful in his action, he never offends us by unmeaning rant. When one so young relies more on his own judgment than on the flattery of partial friends, we cannot expect too much from him. We doubt if any aspirant at the same age has ever equalled him. No performer, perhaps, ever was received and continued to play with so much applause. On the dropping of the curtain at the end of the fourth act, he was rewarded with nine rounds of cheers."

His unmistakable triumph was crowned by such loud and general calls for an engagement that the manager came forward and announced that he had secured the services of Mr. Forrest for two nights, and that he would appear, on the evening after the next, in the character of Rolla. This, on the whole, was the most signal and important victory he had ever achieved. It consoled him and it spurred him. He slept sweetly that night under his mother's roof, and in his dreams saw himself decked with wreath and crown, time after time, through a long vista of brightening successes.

The Bowery Theatre, in New York, now nearly finished, was to be opened in the autumn, and its proprietors were on the watch to secure the best talent for the company. They had heard favorable reports of the acting of Forrest in Albany. Prosper M. Wetmore and another of the directors of the new theatre made a journey to that city on purpose to see a specimen of his performance and decide whether or not it would be expedient to engage him. They were so much pleased with his playing that they earnestly urged Gilfert, who was already engaged as manager, to close with him at once. He did so, bargaining with him to play leading parts for the first season at a salary of twenty-eight dollars a week. Wetmore, who was a cultivated gentleman of literary habits, afterwards Navy Agent at New York, became a fast friend of Forrest for life, and half a century later was fond of recalling the incidents of this journey, so interesting in the adventure and so pleasant in the results.

Gilfert had lost money at Albany, and, when he closed, his

company were dismissed unpaid, some of them utterly destitute. Forrest himself was forced to leave his wardrobe with his hostess as security for arrearages. He took passage down the Hudson to New York, and, securing lodgings at a tavern in Cortlandt Street, began as best he could to fill the time until the opening of the Bowery. He was a stranger in the city. He was without money, without friends, his wardrobe in pawn, with no stated employment to occupy his attention and pass the hours. Naturally, life seemed dull and the days grew heavy. First he felt homesick; then he felt sick of himself and sick of the world. His faculties turned in on themselves, and made him so morbidly melancholy that he thought of ending his existence. He actually went to an apothecary and got some arsenic on pretence that he wanted to kill rats. This revulsive and dismal state of feeling, however, did not last long. An event occurred which brought him relief and caused him to fling away the poison and resume his natural tone of cheerful fortitude and readiness for enjoyment.

The propitious event referred to was this. An actor at the Park Theatre, by the name of Woodhull, was about having a benefit, and experienced much difficulty in deciding on something attractive for the occasion. Walking in the street with Charles Durang, of Philadelphia, who had recently seen Forrest act in that city, and expressing his anxiety to him, Durang replied, "If I were you, I would try and get Forrest to act for me. And there he is now, sitting under the awning in front of the hotel. I will introduce you." The deed suited the word, and in a moment Woodhull had made his request. At first Forrest somewhat moodily declined, saying that he was penniless, friendless, spiritless, and could do nothing. "But," the poor actor urged, "I have a large family dependent on me, and this benefit is my chief reliance." "Is that so?" asked Forrest. "It is, indeed," was the reply. "Then," said the generous tragedian, mounting out of his unhappiness, "I will play Othello for you, and do my best." The new acquaintances parted with hearty greetings, Woodhull to finish the arrangements for his benefit, Forrest to prepare for his arduous task. For he felt that this his first appearance in the chief metropolitan theatre of the country was an ordeal that might make him or undo him quite.

He shut himself up in his room with his Shakspeare. He

studied the part with all the earnestness of his soul, over and over, with every light he could bring to bear upon it, carefully perfected himself in it according to his best ideal, and impatiently awaited the evening. It came, and found a house poor in numbers, which disheartened him not a whit. Durang was there, and has described the scene. The audience, though neither fashionable nor large, was eager and susceptible. As the actor came on, his careful costume, superb form, and reposeful bearing made a strong sensation on the expectant auditory. And when the sweet, resonant tones of his deep, rich voice broke forth in the eloquence of an unaffected manliness, the charm was obviously deepened. His remarkable self-possession and deliberate way of doing just what he intended to do were very impressive, and, combined with his terrible earnestness growing with the thickening plot, took hold of the sympathies of the house more and more powerfully. In the middle of the pit sat Gilfert, energetically plying his snuff-box and inspecting alternately the player and the spectators. And when, in the fourth act, as the pent flood of passion in the breast of the tortured Othello burst in fearful explosion on Iago in one resplendent climax of attitude, look, voice and gesture, and the whole audience rose to their feet and gave vent to their unprecedented excitement in round after round of cheering, the little Dutchman let his snuff-box mechanically slip through his fingers, and cried, "By heaven, he has made a hit!" The popular verdict was one of unqualified enthusiasm, and the directors and manager of the Bowery felt that they had underrated their prize. Gilfert hurried behind the scenes, lavishing congratulations on his protégé, and promising the next day to pay his debts and supply him with some pocket-money. In doing a kind thing for a needy fellow-actor, Forrest found that he had also done an exceedingly good thing for himself.

With the means he had wrung from the delinquent and doubtful but now sanguine Gilfert, he proceeded to Albany and redeemed his wardrobe. He then went to Washington, and played Rolla for the benefit of his brother William. He next fulfilled an engagement as a Star for six nights in Baltimore, and then paid a visit to his home in Philadelphia. He was able from the remnant of his earnings to carry four hundred dollars to his mother. And when he gave it to her, sitting happy at her feet, and told her of

his trials, and of his struggles against them, as he felt her hand on his head and saw her fond eyes looking approval, the sweetness of the satisfaction seemed to sink into his very bones. So he himself said, and added, "The applause I had won before the foot-lights? Yes, it was most welcome and precious to me; but, compared with this, it was nothing, less than nothing!"

The Bowery was opened with great display and success the last week in October. On the following Monday Forrest made his first appearance there. Othello was the play. The house was thronged in all parts, everything was fresh and new, eager expectation filled the air, and he came forward encouraged by the memory of his decisive triumph at the benefit of Woodhull, and nerved with determination now to outdo it. Yet, in spite of all the favoring conditions, so much depended on the result of his performance this night, and his sensitiveness was still so little hardened by custom, that his nervousness and trepidation were quite apparent to critical eyes. But as the play progressed this wore off, and his acting became so sincere, so varied and vigorous, he set his best points in such clean-cut relief, and his elocution was so full of natural passion, that he carried the sympathies of the audience with him ascendingly to the close. The ovation he then received left no doubt as to the place he was thenceforth to hold in the theatrical world of New York and the country. By unanimous consent, admitting errors and faults both positive and negative, he had shown an extraordinary breadth and raciness of original individuality, and an extraordinary power of painting the character he had pictured in his imagination so vividly that it should also live in the imaginations of the beholders and kindle their sensibilities. This is the one test of the true actor, that he can transmit his thoughts and passions into others, causing his ideal so to move before them that they recognize it and react on it with the play of their souls accordant with his. This given, all defects are pardoned; this denied, all merits are ineffectual. Forrest had this from first to last, whenever appeal was made from dialect cliques to the great vernacular of human nature.

At the close of the performance Forrest was personally congratulated by the stockholders of the theatre in the committee-room. Their chairman said to him, "We are all very much

more than gratified. You have made a great hit; but, if you are willing, we would like to cancel our engagement with you at twenty-eight dollars a week, and——" Here Forrest interrupted him by saying, "Certainly, gentlemen; just as you please; for I am confident I can readily command those terms almost anywhere I feel disposed to play." "We have no doubt of it," replied the chairman; "but we propose to cancel the engagement made with you at twenty-eight dollars a week, and to draw an agreement giving you forty dollars a week instead." This of course was very agreeable to him, and accordingly it was so arranged.

With this night his histrionic probation was at an end, and fame and fortune were secure. It was now that he made the acquaintance of James Lawson, who was so enraptured with his playing that he sought an introduction on the spot, and then went home and wrote for one of the morning papers a glowing eulogium on the performance. Lawson remained through life one of his most trusted and useful friends, especially in his business concerns, never wavering in his loyalty to him for one moment in all the succeeding years, and surviving to be one of the trustees of his estate. Here, also, at the same time, and under the identical circumstances, began his friendship with Leggett, one of the most important and valued attachments he ever formed. Leggett, at that time associated with Bryant in the editorship of the New York "Evening Post," was a man of a high-strung, chivalrous nature, possessed of uncommon talents and of immense force of character. Among his fine tastes was a sincere passion for the drama. He was the elder by four years, and had enjoyed far superior educational advantages. He loved Forrest devotedly as soon as he knew him, and his affection was as ardently returned. In their manly truth and generous sympathy, which knew no taint of affectation or mean design, they were a great comfort to each other. In the fourteen years that passed before death came between them they rendered invaluable services to each other in many ways.

The following letter is interesting in several respects. It shows his great devotion to his mother, betrays his tendency to occasional depression of spirit, and reveals even so early in his life that irregular violence in the currents of his blood from the

effects of which he finally died. It bears date a little less than a month after his début at the Bowery.

"NEW YORK, Dec. 3d, 1826.

"MOST BELOVED MOTHER,—The reason I have not answered your letter is a serious indisposition under which I have been laboring for some time. But, thanks be to the Eternal (only for your sake and my dear sisters'), I am now convalescent. You will ask, no doubt, why it is only for your sake that I thank the Eternal. Because were you separated forever from me existence would have no longer an attraction. Again, you will wonder what has made me tired of life, especially now that I am on the full tide of prosperity. Alas! I know not how soon sickness may render me incapable of the labors of my profession; and then penury, perchance the poor-house, may ensue. I shudder to think of it. Yet the terrible reflection haunts me in spite of myself; and were it not for you and the girls I should not shrink to try the unsearchable depths of eternity. But no more of this gloomy subject.

"Dining last Sunday with Major Moses, when the cloth was removed, as I was preparing to take a glass of wine, I felt a pain in my right breast, which rapidly increased to such a degree that I told the Major, who sat next to me, of the singular sensation. I had no sooner spoken than the pain shot to my heart and I fell upon the floor. For the space of fifteen minutes I lay perfectly speechless. When, through the kind attentions of the family (which I can never forget), I had in a measure recovered, the pain was still very violent. A physician was summoned, who bled me copiously, and this relieved my sufferings. In consequence of my weakened and distressed condition, I was persuaded to stay there all night. The next morning I returned to my lodgings, and remained in-doors all day, though feeling perfectly recovered. But the following evening, very injudiciously, I performed Damon. The exertion in this arduous part caused a relapse, which, however, was not seriously felt until Thursday evening, when I was performing William Tell. Then, indeed, it was agony. All that I had suffered before was but the shadow of a shade to what I then felt,—pains in all my limbs, and my head nigh to bursting. With the unavoidable use of brandy, ether, and hartshorn, I got wildly through the character. Since that time I have had

medical attendance and every attention that kindness can show. In a few days, without doubt, I shall be on the boards again.

"I received a few days ago a letter from William, which remains unanswered. Please inform him of the cause. I shall take my benefit shortly, and am led to believe that it will be all that I can desire. Do not think I shall then forget those who heretofore may sometimes have had cause to upbraid me. Farewell, dear mother.

"Tell Henrietta to write, and quickly, too.

"Yours most affectionately,

"EDWIN FORREST."

His illness proved, as he thought it would, brief. His success knew no abatement. He drew such crowds nightly and excited them to such a pitch that the whole city became alive and agog about him. Of the many tributes then paid him, these lines may serve as a specimen:

"See how the stormy passions of the soul
Are EDWIN FORREST'S, and at his control;
How he can drive the curdling blood along
Its choking channels—how his face and tongue
Can check the current as it seeks the brain,
Arrest its course, and bring it back again;
Freeze it when circling round the glowing heart,
Or thaw it thence, and bid it, melting, part;
Rouse up revenge for Tell's unmeasured wrongs
Until it echoes from a thousand tongues;
Or melt the soul of friendship quite away
When Damon claims his Pythias' dying day."

From this auspicious beginning he went steadily on gaining power and public favor until his popularity was so conspicuous that one of the managers of the rival establishment came to him with an offer of three times the amount he was then receiving. He replied, "I cannot listen to you, as I am engaged to Gilfert for the season." "You are not bound by a legal paper, and therefore are free," expostulated the wily bargainer. "Sir," was his characteristic answer, "my word is as strong as any written contract." During this first winter, so rapidly did his fame spread that Gilfert actually lent him repeatedly to other theatres at two hundred dollars a night, he still paying him only his forty

dollars a week. Certain disinterested persons who learned this fact commented on it to Gilfert himself with much severity. And at the end of the engagement he said to the young man, "I want to engage you for the next season, but I suppose our terms must be somewhat different. What do you expect?" Forrest quietly looked at him, and replied, "You have yourself fixed my value. You have found me to be worth two hundred dollars a night." He was at once engaged at that rate for eighty nights. And it is to be remembered that sixteen thousand dollars then was equivalent to thirty thousand now. He had just passed his twenty-first birthday. Thus in six short months the youthful artist who came to the metropolis poor, scarcely known, little heralded, had acquired an imposing fame, was surrounded by a brilliant host of friends, and entered on his summer vacation prospective master of a sumptuous income.

CHAPTER VIII.

GROWTH AND FRESHNESS OF PROFESSIONAL GLORY: INVIDIOUS ATTACKS AND THEIR CAUSES.

The next marked division in the biography of Forrest covers the period between his twenty-first and his twenty-eighth year, from the close of his first engagement at the Bowery in 1827 to his departure for Europe in 1834. No other actor ever lived who at so early an age achieved a series of popular successes so steady, so brilliant, so extensive as those which filled these seven triumphant and happy years. They yet remain unparalleled. It was undoubtedly the most fortunate and the most enjoyed period of all in his long career. His health and vigor were superb, his faculties joyously unfolding, his senses in their keenest edge, his glory spreading on all sides, money pouring into his purse, the general love and praise lavished on him scarcely as yet broken by the dissenting voices or alloyed by the signals of envy. His name was emblazoned in the chief cities all over the land, the press teemed with kindly notices, his performances were attended nightly by enthusiastic crowds, who applauded him to the very echoes that applauded again.

In his social relations,—the secondary domain of life,—he saw his desires flatteringly gratified in an increasing degree, his goings and comings announced like those of a king, the eyes of the throng turned after him wherever he went, his thoughts and passions taking electric effect on the excited crowds who gathered to gaze on his playing, choice friends suing for his leisure hours. The common estimate of him and the popular feeling towards him are accurately reflected in the sonnet addressed to him at this time by his friend Prosper M. Wetmore:

> "Enriched with Nature's brightest powers of mind,
> Deep is thy influence o'er man's feeling breast;

When fiercest passions come at thy behest
In all the magic strength of truth, they bind
'Neath their broad spell the pulses of the heart,
Freezing the soul with horror and dismay:
O'er Tarquin's corse, where Brutus leads the way,
Revenge stalks darkly forth: thy potent art
Recalls the aged Lear to tell his woes,
Enlisting in his cause each sense that thrills:
Stern Richard smiles upon the blood he spills:
Tell, patriot Tell, defies his tyrant foes.

"Eagle-eyed Genius round thy youthful name
Flashes the brilliance of a deathless Fame!"

And in the primary domain of life—his own physique—he was blessed with a basis of favorable conditions quite as rare. His clean-sinewed frame so firmly poised in its weighty centres, his rich flood of blood copiously nourishing the seats of function, his generous intelligence and his native fearlessness of temper, were the ground of a gigantic complacency in himself which was equally pleasurable to him and attractive to others so long as he intuitively experienced rather than consciously asserted it. He was vaguely aware, in an uncritical way, that his sphere was heavier than those of the men he met, that the elemental rhythms of his being were larger, that the gravitation of his personal force overswayed theirs. While this was indicated by nature without his knowledge, it made him interesting, a sort of magnet to which others swayed in loyal curiosity or affection. And such was entirely the case up to this time. His frank, fresh nature was as yet unwrung by injustice, malignity, and falsehood, unspoiled either by souring adverses or sickening satieties. He was a wholesome specimen of a man of the unperverted, untechnical human type, to whom, in his personal harmony and power, with his loving and trusted friends and his progressive grasping of the prizes of the great social struggle, the experience of each day as it came and went was a cup of nectar which he quaffed without a question, finding neither guilt at the top nor remorse at the bottom.

But he had sufficient force and height of character not to yield himself up to selfish indulgence. Notwithstanding the flattery bestowed on him, he felt the defects in his education, and

determined to remedy them as well as he could. He knew that he needed the polish of literary and social culture and the training of critical studies alike to supplement the advantages and to neutralize the disadvantages of the coarse and boisterous scenes—the bold and lawless styles of men—amidst which much of his life in the West and South had been passed. Accordingly, when the opportunity was given him for a choice of associates, he took for his intimate friends in New York a very different class from those he had affiliated with in New Orleans. Without at all losing his taste for manly sports or shunning the company of their votaries, his preferred friends were men of literary and artistic tastes, of the highest refinement and the best social rank. A large number of accomplished persons, like Leggett, Bryant, Wetmore, Halleck, Inman, Ingraham, Dunlap, Lawson, were in those years on affectionate terms with him as his avowed admirers. From their example, their conversation, their criticism, he profited much. He became a liberal buyer of books, and soon had an excellent library, which he used faithfully, devoting a large portion of his leisure to reading. Nor did he read idly. He read as a student, reflecting on what he read, striving to improve his mind and taste by knowledge in general, as well as to pierce more deeply into the philosophy of the dramatic art in particular. He made himself familiar with the history of plastic and pictorial art, with engravings of celebrated statues and paintings, carefully noting their most impressive attitudes and groupings. He also explored the history of costume in the principal countries, classic, mediæval, and modern. The habit of reading and meditating which he formed at this time was fostered by many influences, grew stronger with his years, spread over wide provinces of biography, poetry, philosophy, and science, and was to the very last the chief solace and ornament of his existence.

While thus devoting himself with new zeal to mental culture, he did not forego one whit of his old assiduity in exercises for the furtherance of his bodily development. During his second year in New York he took a series of lessons in boxing. He felt a great interest in this art, became a redoubtable proficient in its practice, and was ever an earnest and open admirer of its prominent heroes. Those who feel this to be discreditable to him will find on reflection, if they think fairly, that it was, on

the contrary, a credit to him. Multitudes of refined people have an intense admiration for superlative developments of physical beauty, force, and courage, though they conceal their taste because by the standards of a squeamish politeness it is considered something low and coarse. But Forrest always scorned that style of public opinion, defied it, and frankly lived out what he thought and felt. At the time of the famous fight between Heenan and Sayers for the belt of world-championship, it was clear that scholars, poets, statesmen, divines, and even fashionable women, felt the keenest interest in the contest. They read the details with avidity, and talked of them with the liveliest eagerness. The fascination is nothing to be ashamed of, but rather to be cultivated with pride. To a just perception, the fighting is not attractive, but repulsive and dreadful. It is the strength, grace, discipline, smiling fearlessness, superb hardihood, connected with the struggle, the rare exaltation of the most fundamental qualities of a kingly nature, that evoke admiration. Surely it is better to be a perfect animal than an imperfect one. When all things are in harmony, the finest corporeal condition is the basis for the highest spiritual power. A champion in finished training, with his perfected form, his marble skin, clear unflinching eyes, corky tread, and indomitable pluck, is a thrilling sight. When the crowd see him, their enthusiasm vents itself in a shout of delight. His mauling his adversary into a disfigured mass of jelly is indeed frightful and loathsome; but that is a base perversion, not the proper fruition, of his high estate. The functional power of his bearing is magnificent. He is in a condition of godlike potency. It is a higher thing to admire this glorious wealth of force, ease, and courage than to despise it. Personal gifts of strength, skill, fearlessness, are certainly desirable on any level in preference to the corresponding defects. To turn away from them with disgust is a morbid weakness, not a proof of fine superiority. While in this world we cannot escape the physical level of our constitution, however much we may build above it. Is it not plainly best as far as possible to perfect ourselves on every level of our nature? An Admirable Crichton, able to surpass everybody on all the successive heights of human accomplishments, from fencing with swords to fencing with wits, from dancing to dialectics, cannot be held, except by a mawkish judg-

ment, as inferior to a Kirke White writing verses of pale piety while dying of consumption brought on by over-stimulus of literary ambition.

Forrest had pretty thoroughly practised gymnastics, the exercises of the military drill, horsemanship, and fencing, each of which has a particular efficacy in developing and economizing power, by harmonizing the nervous system, if the will does not interpose too much resistance to the flow of the rhythmical vibrations through the muscles. He now felt that there was a special virtue in the mastery of boxing; and to avail himself of it he secured the services of George Hernizer, a distinguished professor of the manly art, a man of immense strength, great experience, and not a little moral dignity. Supreme mastership, in whatever province it be achieved, even though it be in the mere ranges of physical force and prowess, gives its possessor an assured feeling of competency and superiority, which has an intrinsic moral value and reflects itself through him in some quiet lustre of repose and security. It is those whose equilibrium is most unstable who are the most irritable and resentful. It is weakness and insecurity that make one fretful and quarrelsome. Shakspeare says it is good to have a giant's strength, but tyrannous to use it like a giant. We know that the more gigantic the resources of a man the less tempted he is to put them forth. It is ever your weakling who is naturally waspish.

Before putting on the gloves with his pupil for the first time, Hernizer sat down with him and talked with him for half an hour in a wise and kindly manner on the morality of the art, or the true spirit in which it should be approached. He summed up in terse maxims the principles which ought to govern all who practise it, and enforced them with apt illustrations. He warned him especially never to lose his temper, and never to presume on the advantages of his skill to strike any man unnecessarily. He said that every boxer who had the instincts of a gentleman was made more generous and forbearing by his safeguard of reserved power. Forrest, eager to be at the work, and scarcely appreciating the propriety or value of the lecture, listened to it impatiently at the time, but remembered it with profit and gratitude all his life. As he recalled the circumstances and lingered over the narrative forty years later, a light of retrospective fondness

played in his eyes, and his tongue seemed laved and lambent with love.

When he had taken lessons for about six months, one day when his nervous centres were aching with fulness of power, as he was sparring with his teacher, a sort of good-natured berserker rage came over him. The ancestral instincts of love of battle burned in his muscles, and he longed to pitch into the strife in right down sincerity. "Come, now, Hernizer," he cried, "let us try it for once in real earnest." "Pshaw! no, no!" replied the master, parrying him off. But waxing warmer and warmer in the play he pressed hard on him, putting in the licks so hot and heavy that at last Hernizer, rallying on his resources, fetched him a blow fair between the eyes that made him see stars and sent him reeling against the wall. "I have got enough!" exclaimed Forrest, with a laugh, as soon as he could collect himself, and went and threw his arms around his teacher; and the two athletes stood in a smiling embrace, their naked breasts clasped together, and the great waves of warm blood mantling through them. Such a passage would have made untrained and nervous men angry or sullen, but it only made these giants laugh with pleasure and sharpened their fellowship. However, Forrest said, he never again asked Hernizer to buckle to it in earnest.

Forrest did not inherit that herculean poise of power which for half a century made him such a massive mark of popular admiration. He attained it by training. And herein he is a splendid example to his countrymen, thousands on thousands of whom, in their whining debility, dyspeptic pallor, and fidgety activity, need nothing else so much as a thorough physical regimen to replenish their blood, soothe their exasperated nerves, and give a solid equilibrium to their energies. The Greeks and Romans, the nobles and knights of the Middle Age, were wiser than we in securing a superb physical basis for human perfection. Men like Plato, Pericles, Æschylus, Sophocles, were foremost in the palæstra as well as in the lists of mind. There never was another time or land in which the excited suspicions and emulations of society tended so terribly as in our own to fret and haggardize men and prematurely break them down and wear them out. Our incessant reading, our excessive brain-work, cloys the memory, impoverishes the heart, wearies the soul, and destroys the capacity

for relishing simple natural enjoyments. This is one of the morals which the biography of Forrest ought to emphasize by the brilliant contrast it exhibits. For he at thirty, the period when laborious Americans begin to give out, had developed an organism of extraordinary power, with cleanly-freed joints and firmly-knit fibres and a copiously-stocked reservoir of vitality. With an unfailing digestion which quickly assimilated the nutriment from what he ate, effort slowly tired, rest rapidly restored him. As he himself once expressed it, the engine was strong and there was always plenty of fire under the boiler. He therefore felt no need of stimulation; and this, no doubt, was one of his safeguards against that insidious temptation to intemperance to which so many members of his profession, from the exhausting nature of its irregular exertions, are fatally exposed. A full force of vitality transfuses the elastic frame with an electric consciousness of pleasure and wealth. It is the ready power to do anything we like within the limits of our nature, just as a rich man feels that he can buy this, that, or the other thing at any moment if he wishes. In contrast with the drooping, tremulous man, overtasked and drained, startled at each sound, shrinking from the thought of effort, crossing the street to avoid the trial of accosting an acquaintance, afflicted with lingering pains by the slightest injury, there is nothing so inexhaustibly fascinating as an exuberant vigor of life in the senses, easily shedding annoyances, quickly healing hurts, ready at every turn for transmutation into any form of the universal good.

The effect of an artistic drill resolutely applied is something which very few persons appreciate. Faithfully practised, its power is surprising. Most observers, instead of recognizing its steady accumulation of gains, attribute the startling result to exceptional genius. Artistic drill for super-eminent excellence in *any* personal accomplishment has a moral value no less than a physical service but little understood. It lifts one above the multitude in that particular and gives him distinction. It thus fosters self-respect and puts him at work with greater zeal and assurance. It is thus a moral basis of inspiration and contentment. The *drill* of the horseman, the sportsman, the boxer, the soldier, the dancer, the singer, the orator, has an effect quite distinct from and superior to that of labor or exercise. Labor or exercise is straggling, broken,

fitful; but drill is regular, symmetric, *rhythmical*, and has an influence to refine and exalt by economizing and directing the forces of the organism while enhancing them. It is a discipline of art. In its final completeness, corporeal and mental, it gives one an easy confidence, a feeling of competency, which is a great luxury. It enables one to stand up before his fellow-men with free chest and alert spirit and look straight in their eyes without blenching and perform his tasks without flurry. This was Forrest. He attained this deliberate self-possession, this mastery of his resources, in a degree which cannot be ascribed to one actor out of ten thousand, to one man out of a million.

A brief account of his first appearance in Boston will give an idea of the experience which he enjoyed in those years, in constant repetition, as his fresh engagements led him over the land from city to city.

"BOSTON, February 7th, 1827.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,—Sunday evening I arrived, after a tedious and wearisome journey, at the place which is called the literary emporium of the Western hemisphere, and on Monday evening, for the first time in my life, made my bow to the good people of Massachusetts. I was received with acclamations of delight, and the curtain fell amidst repeated and enthusiastic testimonials of gratification and approval.

"Here, mother, I must break off awhile; for Mr. Fisher, a Quaker preacher, has just stepped in to see me. He was one of my fellow-passengers hither in the stage-coach; and as he is a very agreeable man, possessing much mind, I have a disposition to treat him with deference and respect.

"Evening, 11 o'clock.

"I have just returned from performing William Tell. The house was crowded, and the applause generous. I am charmed with the Boston people. They are both liberal and refined. In this place I shall add much to my reputation, as well as enlarge my purse, and at present this latter is as necessary and will be as acceptable as the former.

"Why does not brother William write me oftener than he does? Did you receive the $100 I sent you?

"All court, every attention, is paid me here by the young men of first respectability. These truly flattering attentions make me

hold you, beloved mother, dearer than ever before. I trust I shall not live in vain, but hold my course a little longer, that I may restore you to peace and competency and reflect a mellow light upon the evening of your declining day.

"With sincerest love for sisters and brother, I am yours till death.

"EDWIN FORREST."

It was on the opening night of this engagement, February 5th, 1827, in the old Federal Street Theatre, in the character of Damon, that Forrest was seen for the first time by James Oakes, who was destined to be his most intimate and devoted friend from that hour unto the close of earth. After the play Oakes went behind the scenes and obtained an introduction, his heart yet shaking from his eyes the watery signals of the profound emotion awakened in him by the performance. The new acquaintance was cemented by a long and happy conversation in the room of the actor, though neither of them could then have dreamed how momentous a part it was to bear henceforth in the lives of both. They flowed harmoniously together as if they had been foreordained for each other by being set to the same rhythm. Forrest was a little less than twenty-one, Oakes a little less than twenty years old at that time. They were as alert and sinewy, as free and pleasureful, as a couple of bounding stags, and the world lay all before them in roselight. Ah, what a tinge of pensive wonder, what a shade of mournful omen, would have dropped on the bright sentiment of that exuberant season if they could have foreseen all to the end,—the tragic sorrows and deaths of so many of their friends, leaving these two to journey on, clinging the closer the more others fell away!

A little over four months after his brilliant success in Boston, he appeared, under circumstances less auspicious, in the capital of Rhode Island, and had a short but ominous illness, which he described in a letter to his mother.

"PROVIDENCE, 20th June, 1827.

"DEAR MOTHER,—I performed for the first time under the immediate patronage of Providence on Friday evening last. And, to say truth, it was but to 'a beggarly account of empty boxes,'—a thing very strange to me nowadays. The theatre is an old barn

of a place, and reminds me very much of the itinerant expeditions of my early days in Ohio and Kentucky, days which often come back to my thought and twinge me with their bitter-sweet memories. This edifice, however, is rendered sacred in my eyes by the remembrance that George Frederick Cooke once performed in it to enraptured audiences. The company is wretched, but to-morrow it is to receive new acquisitions, and fair hopes are aroused that in the event the enterprise will prove profitable.

"Last Monday evening, while enacting the character of Virginius, in one of the most impassioned scenes, the blood rushed with such violence into my head that it was with the utmost difficulty I could complete the performance. Never in the course of my life have I experienced such agony and horror as in that moment. I returned to my lodgings and vainly commended myself to sleep. It was not till I had had administered to me an anodyne powerful enough to have made me at any other time sleep the sleep of death that I could secure repose. The next morning I awoke unrefreshed and with little abatement of the pain. A physician was sent for, who cupped me on the back of the neck, producing instant relief. I have since been rapidly recovering, and shall, no doubt, be perfectly competent to the intended performance of Jaffier to-morrow night.

"I hope to pass a day or two with you about the 4th of July. Tell the girls I shall bring them some presents. By the time I reach New York you shall hear further about the bust for which I have given sittings to a sculptor at the request of a group of my friends.

"Your affectionate son,

"Edwin Forrest."

By his fidelity in varied physical drill, Forrest had become a prodigy of strength and endurance. With vivid passions, enormous vitality, an ingenuous and sympathetic soul, a most attractive person, in the unconventional habits of the freest of the professions, few men were ever more beset within and without by the temptations to a dissipated and spendthrift course. One guardian influence against these temptations was the warning examples of so many members of his profession whom he saw ruined by such indulgences, losing self-respect and sinking to the

lowest abandonment, coming to untimely graves, or left in their age destitute and helpless. As one instance after another of this sort came under his observation, he resolved to heed the lesson, to be industrious, temperate, and prudent, and to husband his earnings. His spontaneous tendency was to profusion, and he gave away and lent lavishly. Learning wisdom, he became more careful in lending, but always continued liberal in giving, and never had a passion for saving until, largely alienated from society, he fell back as a natural resource on that habit of accumulation which is so apt to grow by what it feeds on.

But another influence of restraint and carefulness was stronger with him than fear, and that was filial duty and love. Looking back to those days from the closing part of his life, he said, with deep emotion, "One of the strongest incentives to me in my early exertions was the desire of relieving my mother and my sisters by securing them independence and comfort in a home of their own." This sacred purpose he had promised himself to fulfil. He never lost sight of it. Under date of Buffalo, August 18th, 1827, he had written the following letter to his mother:

"Dear Mother,—After a tedious and not very profitable engagement at Albany, I proceeded thence in a westerly direction with my friend D. P. Ingraham, of whom you have often heard me speak in terms of respect and admiration. I make this journey for the purpose of recreation, in viewing the romantic beauties with which nature has clothed and adorned herself in this part of our country, and the developments of art and industry which are here so rapidly leading to wealth and happiness. I have passed through a series of flourishing towns,—Schenectady, Amsterdam, Utica, Clinton, Vernon, Auburn, Canandaigua, Rochester, and others,—all of which have given me delight. Buffalo is in a dull situation, and I shall leave at once in a steamboat for the Falls of Niagara. Before this tremendous and sublime cataract I anticipate much pleasure in the excitement of those exalted feelings in which my soul loves to luxuriate. From there we shall go to Montreal and Quebec, and then return to New York.

"Before beginning my winter engagement I shall visit you. My salary for the next year is advanced from $40 a week to $400. I should now like—and indeed no pleasure in the world could

equal it—to settle you and my dear sisters down in some respectable, handsome, and quiet part of Philadelphia, where you may gently pass your dear reserves of time apart from the care and toil with which you have too long been forced to struggle. I say Philadelphia, because I fear you could not be prevailed on to come to New York. And indeed I do not wonder; for, besides the numerous circle of friends you have, it is there that the sacred ashes of my father lie.

"I shall write more fully anon.

"Your affectionate son,

"EDWIN."

For three years now his income had been large and his investments sagacious. The time had arrived for carrying out his design. It was the autumn of 1829, when he was but twenty-three years old. Collecting everything he possessed, he went from New York to Philadelphia, paid the debts his father had left at his death twelve years before, bought a house in the name of his mother and sisters, and deposited in the bank to their account all he had remaining, thus securing them a handsome support whatever might happen to him. What a luxury it must have been to him to do this! It was the proudest and sweetest day he had known in his life. The deed was an unobtrusive one, with no scenery to emblazon it, no crowd to applaud; but the most eloquent climax he ever made on the stage could not speak so strongly to the heart. His own heart must have made blessed music in his breast as he returned to New York thinking that for his dear mother and sisters, after so many years of bitter poverty and toil, now there was to be no more drudgery or anxiety. Meeting his friend Lawson the evening after his return, he exclaimed, "Thank God, I am not worth a ducat!" and, relating what he had done, received his heartiest congratulations on it.

At this time American literature in all its forms was chiefly derived from English sources. As yet it scarcely had any vigorous, independent existence. This was emphatically true of the drama. Hardly a play of any success or note had been produced in this country by a native author. All the literary circles were slavishly subjected to English authority, and this whole province of life, both in respect of intellectual production and taste and in

respect to the business management of it, was principally under English control. The managers of our theatres felt that their interest lay in getting tested plays from abroad at a merely nominal price, rather than in expending larger sums on the risky experiment of securing original productions at home. But Forrest was never an unthinking conformist in anything, accepting what was customary simply because it was easiest and because others did so. He had a bold individuality which was constantly showing itself. The feeling of nationality and patriotic pride, too, was always intense in him. Moved by this sentiment, as well as by the desire to secure some parts which should be exclusively his own, he began a series of liberal offers, from five hundred to three thousand dollars each, for original plays by American authors. He hoped thus to do something towards the creation of an American Dramatic Literature in the plays which our writers would be stimulated to produce, and to contribute in his own representations of them some original types of acted characters to the youthful stage of his country. He was the first American actor who had ever had the enterprise, ambition, and liberality to do this. It shows generous qualities of character,—the boldness of genius and faith,—especially when it is remembered that he was only twenty-two years old when he issued his first proposal, which was published by his friend Leggett with a brief preface in a weekly review of which he was then proprietor and editor:

"We have received the following note from Edwin Forrest, and take great pleasure in communicating his generous proposition to the public in his own language. It is much to be desired that native genius may be aroused by this offer from native genius, and that writers worthy to win may enter the laudable competition.

"'DEAR SIR,—Feeling extremely desirous that dramatic letters should be more cultivated in my native country, and believing that the dearth of writers in that department is rather the result of a want of the proper incentive than of any deficiency of the requisite talents, I should feel greatly obliged to you if you would communicate to the public, in the next number of the 'Critic,' the following offer. To the author of the best Tragedy, in five acts, of which the hero or principal character shall be an aborigi-

nal of this country, the sum of five hundred dollars, and half of the proceeds of the third representation, with my own gratuitous services on that occasion. The award to be made by a committee of literary and theatrical gentlemen.'"

The committee selected by Forrest consisted of his friends Bryant, Halleck, Lawson, Leggett, Wetmore, and Brooks. Fourteen plays were presented in competition, and the prize was adjudged to Metamora, or the Last of the Wampanoags, by John Augustus Stone, of Philadelphia. Afterwards, at intervals, a similar or a larger premium was offered, until he had secured, in all, nine prize plays: Metamora, Oraloosa, and The Ancient Briton, by Stone; The Gladiator, Pelopidas, and The Broker of Bogota, by Robert Montgomery Bird; Caius Marius, by Richard Penn Smith; Jack Cade, by Robert T. Conrad; and Mohammed, by George H. Miles. In the last instance about eighty productions were forwarded to the judges, and, as not one of them was thought to meet the conditions assigned, Forrest sent his check for a thousand dollars to the author of Mohammed, as that was considered the most effective composition, though not well adapted to the stage. The result of his efforts in fostering a native drama was indirectly wide and lasting, in calling general attention to this province of letters and stimulating much able work in it. The result directly was the writing of about two hundred plays, nine of which received prizes. Of these nine-five proved failures after a few trials. But four, namely, Metamora, The Gladiator, The Broker of Bogota, and Jack Cade, possessed remarkable merits, acquired an immense popularity, and are permanently identified both with his personal fame and with the history of the American stage. An analysis of their plots, specimens of their language, and a description of the dramatic character of Forrest in his imposing power and purest originality as the impersonator of their heroes will be given in the next chapter. In leaving this feature of his career, its substance may be briefly summed up. In one way and another, first and last, he paid out from his private purse for the encouragement of a native dramatic literature as much as twenty thousand dollars, in premiums, benefits, and gratuities to several of the unfortunate authors. Recalling his early poverty, scanty education, and hard struggles,

this fact speaks for itself. And the ridicule often in his life cast on him for the comparative failure of the undertaking in a high literary sense, is cheap and unmanly. It was a noble example. Its success personally, and pecuniarily, was emphatic and brilliant in the extreme. Its public influence was neither small nor dishonorable.

While Forrest was filling an engagement in Augusta, Georgia, in 1831, there appeared in the "Chronicle" of that city, from the pen of its editor, A. H. Pemberton, a spirited and vigorous article, entitled "Calumny Refuted, A Defence of the Drama." It was written in response to an article called "Theatre versus Sunday-Schools," published in "The Charleston Observer" by a Presbyterian clergyman named Gildersleeve. The "Chronicle" had warmly commended a favorite actress to the patronage of the citizens of Augusta on occasion of her benefit; whereupon Gildersleeve attacked, from a sectarian point of view, the editor, the actress, and the theatrical art and profession, displaying a narrow and intolerant spirit. Forrest was so much pleased with the ability and catholic temper of the reply which followed, that he had it printed in a pamphlet, with this dedication:

"To Mrs. Brown:

"Madam,—With much pleasure we dedicate to you the following pages from the pen of the editor of the Augusta 'Chronicle,' whose testimony to your amiable qualities in private life and your talents in the dramatic profession we cordially concur in, convinced that the base and unmerited attack which has drawn forth the present publication will meet the reprobation of an enlightened community, and ensure you the public favor you so truly deserve. Wishing you all health and happiness, we remain, Madam, your obedient servants."

Signed by Edwin Forrest and fifteen other actors and actresses.

The summer of 1831 Forrest spent with his friend Robert M. Bird, author of The Gladiator, in a long and delightful tour, visiting the Falls of Niagara, the Natural Bridge in Virginia, the Mammoth Cave of Kentucky, and passing through the Southern States by way of New Orleans to Vera Cruz and Mexico. Just before starting on this journey he had brought out one of his

new plays in Philadelphia, referring to which the "Chronicle" said, "We hope that to-night Mr. Forrest will perceive in pit, box, and gallery substantial proof that his fellow-citizens appreciate his exertions in insuring the success of plays produced by his countrymen, and that they are anxious to treat him with a liberality like that which has always distinguished himself."

His parting performance was Lear. The house was thronged to its utmost capacity, and when the curtain fell there were unanimous and long-continued calls for him. He came forward and made the following speech:

"LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—Though exhausted by the exertions of the evening, I cannot resist the opportunity, thus kindly afforded, to return my unfeigned thanks, not only for the unceasing patronage and liberal applause which you have bestowed upon my humble efforts as a tragedian, but also for your unequivocal approbation of my labors in a cause, the accomplishment of which is the proudest wish of my heart; I mean the establishment of an AMERICAN NATIONAL DRAMA.

"My endeavors cannot but be crowned with success when thus ably seconded by the intelligence of a community whose kindness I most gratefully acknowledge, and whose good opinion it would be my boast to deserve.

"I am, for a while, about to forego the gratification of your smiles,—to exchange the populous city for the mountain-top, the broad lake, the flowering prairie, and the solitude of the pathless wood,—in the hope that, thus communing, my heart may be lifted up, and I may with more fidelity portray the lofty grandeur of the tragic muse from having gazed into the harmonious, unerring, and interminable volume of NATURE.

"Trusting I shall have the honor of appearing before you again next season, I wish you the enjoyment of uninterrupted health and happiness, and bid you, regretfully, *Adieu*."

Dr. Bird was an excellent travelling companion, being a man of most genial quality, fine talents and scholarship, master of the Spanish language, and very familiar with South America in its history, geography, and scenery, and the characteristic traits of its people. The scenes of two of his dramas were laid here;

and at Bogotá and in Peru they talked over the fates of Febro the Broker, and Oraloosa, the last of the Incas. The trip proved a charming and profitable one, and the friends came back to their tasks with increased zeal and vigor.

During the years now under review—from 1827 to 1834—the success and prosperity of Forrest were uninterrupted and unbounded. Not a single incident occurred seriously to mar his happiness. Professional and social honors flowed on him from all quarters. The obstacles put in his way became stepping-stones. He seemed to need only to wish a prize in order to receive it. Ensphered in the splendid and sounding reputation he had won, he passed in starring engagements from city to city through the land, everywhere welcomed with enthusiastic acclaim and the mark of incessant private attentions. To be a popular favorite in this country fifty years ago was a very different thing from what it is now. Then a famous man stood out conspicuously, and was heralded and followed and huzzaed and talked about in a degree scarcely credible to the present generation. Every day the individual seems to wither and dwindle more and more as society dilates and clamors and pushes its monopolizing claims. The conflict of interests, the noisy and hurrying battle of life, the distracting multiplicity of pursuits, duties, and amusements, leave us neither time nor faculty for leisurely contemplation or for disinterestedly admiring other people. We are absorbed in ourselves and the frittering hurly-burly about us. Fame is less sincere and valuable, less easily retained, than it used to be when public attention was not so preoccupied, so jaded and fickle. Those who are accustomed to the rapid succession of actors, singers, orators, coming each season, taking their fees, their bouquets, their applause, and utterly forgotten as soon as they have passed, cannot well realize the extent and steadfastness of the proud affection with which the American people regarded Forrest. Nothing like it seems possible now.

He keenly enjoyed this popularity. Open-hearted as he was, and democratic in temper, nothing else could have given him so much pleasure or have been so stimulating to his ambition as this idolatry from the masses. It was as a luxurious incense in his nostrils; and it made him comparatively insensible to those sneers and snarls, those malignant insinuations and mocking comments

which no one running such a triumphant career could expect altogether to escape. His prosperity was so great, his progress so rapid and constant, his friends so numerous and warm, the common tone of the press so eulogistic, that it was easy for him to shed the assaults of his enemies unnoticed, and to meet the gibes of rancorous critics with equanimity. Firm in his health, proud in his strength, assured in his place, frank and trusting in his love, and satisfied with his work and its prizes, he could afford to smile at impotent attacks. He did so, and stood them for a long time undisturbed.

But when, in later years, the bloom had been somewhat brushed from life, and the freshness worn from experience, and the meaner phases of human nature abundantly brought home to him,—then the war of incompetent and unprincipled criticism, the storm of virulent personal animosities, raging ever worse and worse, was a very different thing. Then the stings of ridicule and falsehood were bitterly felt and resented. Their poison sank deeply into his soul, and, rankling there, made him a changed man. In a subsequent chapter there will be an occasion to do justice to this subject and to its morals by a full treatment. It is appropriate here merely to explain the causes of the unfair depreciation and the venomous hostility with which he was pursued from the time he first appeared suddenly in the theatrical firmament as a star of the first magnitude.

The first cause of the endless flings, aspersions, and belittling valuations of which Forrest was the subject is to be found in the mere fact of his success itself. Every one familiar with the workings of unregenerate human nature must confess the truth of this assertion, dark and sad as it is. In this world of baffled aspirants and jealous rivals the man who surpasses his competitors finds himself amidst a host of foes, who, soured and angry at their own failure, are mortified by his success and strive by malignant detractions to blacken his laurels and drag him down to themselves. Envy is a frightful power among men, and it is said by De Tocqueville to be the characteristic vice of a democracy. Like a diseased eye, it is offended by everything bright. Nobody assails the nobodies who never undertake anything. Few assail the incompetents who fail in what they undertake. But let a strong man conspicuously cover himself with coveted prizes, and hun-

dreds will be snarling at his heels, barking at his glory, eagerly declaring that he does not deserve his success, but that it properly belongs to them. A vast quantity of acrimonious criticism originates in envy. The ancient Roman victors when they rode in a Triumph wore amulets as a protection against the evil eyes of envy.

Another cause in Forrest of offence and numerous dislike was the pronounced distinctiveness of his character, his marked and independent manhood. Most people are of the conventional type in personality and manners, each one as the rest are. And their likings are confined to those of their own stamp. A man of fresh and decisive originality, who is and appears just what God and nature have made him, who thinks for himself, speaks for himself, acts himself out with freedom and power, disturbs and repels them. He irritates their prejudices by violating their standards. His frank and flexible spontaneity, his uncovered impulsive revelation of his feelings, and fearless choice of what he will do or will not do, imply a tacit contempt for their meek conformities and spirit of routine. Thus their self-esteem is hurt and they are made angry. Forrest was a man of this kind, not addicted to swear in the polished phrase of the magistrate, but in his own honest vernacular. The true theory of republican America is that the people should *not* be cast in the monotonous moulds of certain classes or types, the national character a fixed repetition, but that every citizen should be in himself a priest and a king before God, with his own form and color and relish of individuality unrepressed by any foreign dictation. This democratic idea was well realized in Edwin Forrest. It made him all his life a touchstone of hostility to those whose social subserviency it rebuked or whose aristocratic prejudices it set bristling.

He drew forth the animosity and injurious influence of a third set of opponents from among the least noble and successful members of his own profession, with whom, from dissimilarities of tastes and habits and preference for the opportunities of higher intercourse opened to him, he did not intimately associate as an equal. He had an ample supply of friends and comrades endowed with distinguished talents and proud aspirations, scholars, poets, jurists, statesmen, whose fellowship strengthened his ambition, nourished his mind, refined his fancy, gratified his affec-

tions, and led him into the ideal world of books and art. Courted by such gentlemen, with his rising fame and fortune he naturally chose their society, to the neglect of that of his fellow-actors whose haunts were low, whose habits loose, and whose professional status a dull and hopeless mediocrity. It is not customary for the distinguished leaders and masters in any profession to associate in close intimacy with the rank and file of workmen in their departments. It *is* customary, however, for the rank and file to resent the neglect and take their revenge in flouting. Giotto, Lionardo, Raphael, Titian, did not hob-nob and lounge with the ordinary painters of their day. The friends of artists are not artisans, but other artists, their peers, noble patrons, celebrated persons, and inspiring coadjutors. The blame so bitterly and often cast on Forrest in this respect was unjust. The vindictive personal censures which his sometimes absorbed and distant bearing elicited from injured self-love were ignoble. The stock is no doubt often provoked to sneer at the Star; but the action is not beautiful or worthy of deferential attention. If the ordinary members of a profession, instead of looking askance at the extraordinary ones and indulging in detraction, would cultivate admiring sympathy, aspiring intelligence, and nobleness, they would soon bridge the chasm that separates them. It is the absence of generous sensibility and self-respecting application that at once keeps them inferiors and prevents their superiors from becoming their intimates. In the last twenty-five years of his life Forrest had, as a consequence of what he had been through, an explosive irritability of temperament, and not infrequently in moving among theatrical companies betrayed an imperious sense of power. But he was profoundly just, ready instantly to make princely amends when convinced of an error or wrong; and under his harsh and volcanic exterior there always, even to the very last, slept a deep spring of tenderness pure enough to reflect the eyes of angels. It was perfectly natural that he should be misjudged. Not one in a thousand could be expected to have the generous insight, the detachment and gentleness, needed to read him aright. Consequently, a swarm of false accusations and angry remarks pursued him like a buzz of wasps enveloping his head.

Still further, he incurred the special resentment of that class of newspaper critics who expected to receive tribute from those

whom they condescended to praise. Many of these writers for the press have been so accustomed to be courted, flattered, compensated, that they have come to regard a failure on the part of a public performer to propitiate their good graces in advance by suppliant attentions, and to acknowledge them afterwards by thanks if not by rewards, as just cause for turning their pens against the delinquent. Forrest was always too honest and too proud to stoop to anything of this kind. He strove to do the best justice in his power to the characters he impersonated, and would then leave the verdict to the instincts of the public and the unbiassed judgments of competent critics. The utter falsity, unfairness, shallowness, and absurdity which so often marked the dramatic critiques of the press, a large proportion of which were written by persons not only notoriously prejudiced and unprincipled but also ignorant of the elementary principles of criticism, early disgusted and angered him to such a degree that he would have nothing whatever to do with this class of writers, but turned from them with disdain. They knew his feeling, and they sought their revenge by every sort of exaggeration and caricature. With artifices of misrepresentation, burlesque, elaborate assault, and incidental jeer, they racked their ingenuity to lessen his reputation and make him wince. They succeeded better in the latter than in the former.

At that time, as has been said, the influence of English literature and talent held almost exclusive possession of the field in this country, most especially in theatrical matters. All the great travelling stars of the stage, until Forrest rose, had been drawn from the English galaxy. The chief dramatic critics were Englishmen. There was a strong banded interest to keep these things so. But the rising spirit of nationality was beginning to assert itself. In the conflict that ensued, Forrest was made a central figure around whom the struggle raged most fiercely. The English clique were pledged to maintain the supremacy of their own school and its representatives, while the Americans stood up distinctively in support and praise of whatever was native. A majority of the worst critiques against Forrest were written by foreigners under the instigation of the English clique. The extent and power of this passionate bias on both sides are now so nearly a mere matter of the past that it is not easy for

the present generation to realize them. The manager of a prominent New York journal enlisted on the English side, who had a strong antipathy to Forrest on personal grounds, resolved to write him down, cost what it might. A friend of the actor said to the editor, "You cannot do it; he is too popular." The editor replied, "The continual dropping of water wears away the stone," and made his columns pour an incessant rain of satire and abuse. Many a damaging estimate was levelled against him simply as the first American tragedian who had by his original power acquired a national reputation and promised through his increasing imitators to found a school.

Besides all these sets of hostile regarders, he was misliked as a man and maligned or disesteemed as an actor by another class, whose representatives are very numerous, namely, those persons of a feeble and squeamish constitution and sickly delicacy who could not stand the powerful shocks he administered to their nerves. The robust and towering specimens of impassioned manhood which he exhibited, teeming with fearless energies, constantly breaking into colossal attitudes and gestures, lightnings of expression and thunderbolts of speech, were too much for them. Their quivering sensitiveness cowered before his terrible fire and stride, and shrank from him with fear; and fear is the parent of hate. Faint ladies, spruce clerks, spindling fops, and perfumed dandies were horrified and wellnigh thrown into convulsions by his Gladiator and Jack Cade. Then they vented their own weakness and ignorance of virile truth in querulous complaints of his measureless coarseness and ferocity. It is obvious that weaklings will shudder before such heroic volcanoes of men as Hotspur and Coriolanus and resent their own terror on its cause. Forrest produced the same effect when he personated such overwhelming characters on the stage. Made on that pattern and stocked with ammunition on that scale, he lived as it were in reality the parts he played in fiction, and was ever, in his own way and in his own measure, true to nature and life. The lion and the tiger are not to be toned down to the style of the antelope or the mouse because timid spectators may desire it for the sparing of their nerves.

Finally, one more class of play-goers were continually censuring Forrest, casting blame even on his best portrayals. They

had better grounds for their fault-finding than the others, and were partly justified in their verdicts, only unjust in their wilful exaggeration of his defects and ungenerous in their prejudiced denial of his conspicuous and imposing merits. Reference is now made to the select class of refined and scholarly minds, exquisitely cultivated in all directions, who insist that art is distinct from nature, being the purified and heightened reflection of nature through the mind at one remove from reality. Exuberance of power and sincerity was the primary greatness of Forrest as a tragedian. A small but most commanding portion of the public maintained that this too was the chief foible and limitation of his excellence, leading him to attempt on the stage a living resurrection of the crude truth of nature in place of that idealized softening and tempered reflex which is the genuine province of art. Shakspeare himself said that the end of playing was and is not to bring nature herself upon the stage, but to *hold the mirror up to nature*. The perfected artistic actor does not bring before his audience the reality itself of life with all its interclinging entanglements of passion and muscle, but he drops the repulsive details, all unessential vulgarities, refines and combines the chief features, harmonizing and heightening them in the process, and shows the result as a free picture, like the original in form and color and moving, but without its tearing ruggedness or expense of volition. This view is a true one, though not the adequate truth in its completeness. And this criticism is proper, though they who brought it against Forrest, in their intolerance, urged it beyond its fair application to him. It never was claimed that he was a perfect artist; it cannot be honestly denied that he was a great one. As a rule he did, no doubt, lack that last and most irresistible charm of genius, the easy curbing of expenditure which is the divine girdle of art. The bewitchment of the fairest of the goddesses lay in her cestus. The enchanting cestus of art is continence around strength. Human nature flung back on its elemental experiences in their extremest energy breaks loose from the finished forms and manners of polite society, and the conventional members of polite society are naturally displeased with the player who presents a specimen of this kind in its tempestuous truth not refined and tamed to their code. The great characters of Forrest were statues of their originals, recast in their native

moulds in his imagination and heart, and placed directly on the stage in living action. The excrescences unremoved by the chisel and file did not lessen their truth or affect their sublimity. But in the eyes of dilettante critics who had no free intellect behind their glasses and no generous passions beneath their gloves, a perception of the marks of the moulds caused all the heroic grandeur of the images to go for nothing.

It is necessary to bear in mind these six classes of critics in order justly to understand the career of Forrest as an actor with the extraordinary amount of depreciation, invective, and ridicule he encountered as an offset to his surpassing popular success. For before the cliques of critics spoke, while they were speaking, and after they had spoken, unaffected by anything they said, the general average of theatre-goers were played upon in their manliest sympathies by him as by no other actor of his time, and the great mass of the people followed him with their loving admiration and praise like a flood. And in such matters as this, we may be well assured, the permanent judgment of the multitude is never grandly wrong, however pettily right the opinion of the opposing few may be.

January 8th, 1834, Forrest wrote to Henry Hart, officer of a literary society in Albany, the following eminently characteristic letter. The period of critical transition from youth to manhood which he spent in Albany had left lingering recollections of interest and gratitude in him which he gladly availed himself of this opportunity to express in an act of public spirit.

"Sir,—The laudable zeal you have evinced in forming of the Young Men of Albany, without regard to individual condition, an Association for Mutual Improvement, is alike creditable to the heads that projected and the hearts that resolved it. In a country like ours, where all men are free and equal, no aristocracy should be tolerated, save that aristocracy of superior mind, before which none need be ashamed to bow. Young men of all occupations will now have a place stored with useful knowledge where at their leisure they may assemble for mutual instruction and the free interchange of sentiment. A taste for American letters should be carefully disseminated among them, and the parasitical opinion cannot be too soon exploded which teaches

that 'nothing can be so good as that which emanates from abroad.' Our literature should be independent; and with a hearty wish that the fetters of prejudice which surround it may soon be broken, I enclose the sum of one hundred dollars to be appropriated to the purchase of *books purely American*, to be placed in the library for the use of the young men of Albany."

To this letter an interesting reply was written by the president of the Association, Amos Dean:

"The Committee propose, sir, to expend your donation in the purchase of books containing our political history, which, unlike that of most other nations, is made up of the opinions and acts of a People, and not of a Court. Our national existence was the commencement of a new era in the political history of the world. In the commencement and continuance of that existence, three things are to be regarded,—the reason, the act, and the consequence. The first is found in the recorded wisdom of Washington, Jefferson, Adams, Madison, Hamilton, Jay, Franklin, and a host of other worthies who shed the brilliant light of the most gifted order of intellect around the incipient struggles of an infant nation. The second, in the firm resolves of our first councils, and the eloquent voice of our early battle-fields. The third, in the many interesting events of our subsequent history, and on the living page of our present prosperity.

"These constitute a whole, and the books from which that whole is derivable must necessarily be '*books purely American.*' We shall preserve and regard them as monuments of your munificence."

He was now twenty-eight years of age. He had been steadily on the stage for over twelve years. The regular succession of engagements, and even the constant repetition of enthusiastic crowds and applause, began to be monotonous. He had accumulated a fortune of nearly two hundred thousand dollars, and could afford a season of rest. He felt that it would be a relief to throw off the professional harness for a while, and look out upon life from an independent point of view. He was also well aware that there was much for him yet to learn, heights in his

own art which he was far from having attained, and he longed for a large interval of exemption from toil and care, wherein he might quietly apply his faculties to learn, and let his energies lie fallow for a new lease of exertion in the loftiest field of the drama. Accordingly, he determined to set apart two years for travel, observation, study, pleasure, and improvement in the principal countries of the Old World.

Before his departure he received a public tribute of respect and affection of such a character and from a collection of such distinguished men that any man in the country, no matter of what profession or rank, might well have felt proud to receive it. It took place on the 25th of July, and the following account of the affair is condensed from a report which appeared in the New York "Evening Post" immediately afterwards:

"The intention of Mr. Forrest to visit Europe having been stated in the public papers, his approaching departure was considered, by a large number of his fellow-citizens, as presenting a proper occasion to express to him, by some suitable public tribute, the estimation in which he is held, alike for those talents which had placed him at the head of his profession, and those virtues which had endeared him to his friends. To carry out this object, a meeting was held at the Shakspeare Hotel, when the subject was fully discussed, and a committee appointed to consider and report to a subsequent meeting the mode in which the object should be accomplished, so that the tribute might be creditable to the taste of those presenting it and worthy of the high character and merit of him to whom it was to be rendered. In the mean while, the following gentlemen signed a paper expressing the desire of the subscribers to take part in the contemplated testimonial:

Philip Hone,	Wm. Dymock,
Cornelius W. Lawrence,	Gideon Lee,
Ogden Hoffman,	Henry Ogden,
John Lorimer Graham,	Thatcher T. Payne,
John Crumby,	William M. Price,
Charles L. Livingston,	Robert H. Morris,
Daniel L. M. Peixotto,	John Woodhead,
A. A. Cammann,	George Meinell,

Abraham Asten,
Washington Irving,
Wm. C. Bryant,
Prosper M. Wetmore,
William Leggett,
George P. Morris,
Wm. Dunlap,
George D. Strong,
Wm. Holland,
John S. Bartlett,
Thomas H. Perkins, Jr.,
Francis W. Dana,
Wm. F. Whitney,
David Hosack,
James Monroe,
Oliver M. Lownds,
D. P. Ingraham,
Daniel Jackson,
James M. Miller,
F. A. Tallmadge,
James C. Smith,
Wm. T. M'Coun,
Isaac S. Hone,
John V. Greenfield,
William Turner,
William P. Hallett,
John M'Keon,
L. Minturn,
Richard Riker,
Andrew Warner,
J. Fenimore Cooper,
Fitz-Greene Halleck,
William P. Hawes,
Wm. Gilmore Simms,
Robert W. Weir,
R. R. Ward,
Wm. Henry Herbert,
James Lawson,
Wm. H. Delano,
Nathaniel Greene,
James Phalen.

"The committee to whom the matter had been referred reported that a gold medal, with a bust of Mr. Forrest in profile on one side, surrounded by a legend in these words, *Histrioni Optimo*, Eduino Forrest, *Viro Præstanti*, and a figure of the genius of Tragedy with suitable emblems on the other, surrounded, as a legend, with the following quotation from Shakspeare, '*Great in mouths of wisest censure*,' would perhaps constitute the most expressive and acceptable token of those sentiments of admiration and regard which it was the wish of the subscribers to testify to Mr. Forrest. The report having been unanimously adopted, the task of drawing up suitable designs was confided to Mr. Charles C. Ingham. The dies were engraved by Mr. C. C. Wright.

"In accordance with the suggestions of many citizens, a public dinner to Mr. Forrest was agreed upon as furnishing the most appropriate opportunity of presenting to him this token of their regard. To this end a committee was charged to make the

necessary arrangements, and the following is their invitation addressed to Mr. Forrest, together with his reply:

"New York, July 10, 1834.

"To Edwin Forrest, Esq.

"Dear Sir,—A number of your friends, learning your intention shortly to visit Europe, are desirous, before your departure, of an opportunity of expressing, in some public manner, their sense of your merits, professional and personal. It would be a source of regret to them if one so esteemed, while sojourning in foreign lands, should possess no memorial of the regard entertained for him in his own.

"We have been charged as a committee, with a view to carry this purpose into execution, to request the pleasure of your company at a dinner, at the City Hotel, on any day most agreeable to yourself.

"With sincere esteem and respect,

"We are your ob't serv'ts,

William Dunlap,	R. R. Ward,
Henry Ogden,	John V. Greenfield,
William P. Hawes,	Abraham Asten,
George D. Strong,	Prosper M. Wetmore.

"Washington Hotel, July 12th, 1834.

"Gentlemen,—I have had the honor to receive your communication of the 10th instant, inviting me to dine with a number of my friends at the City Hotel previous to my approaching departure for Europe, and signifying a desire to bestow upon me some token of regard, which, as I journey in foreign lands, may preserve in my memory the friends I leave in my own.

"I have received too many and too important testimonials from my friends in New York to render any additional memorial necessary for the purpose you indicate. But, knowing the pleasure which generous natures feel in bestowing benefactions, I accept with lively satisfaction the invitation you have conveyed to me in such grateful terms; and may be excused if, in doing so, I express my regret that the object of your kindness is not more worthy so distinguished a mark of favor.

"With your permission, gentlemen, I will name Friday, the

25th instant, as the day when it will best comport with the arrangements I have already made, to meet you as proposed.

"I am, with sentiments of great
respect and regard,
your ob't serv't,
"EDWIN FORREST.

"Messrs. WM. DUNLAP, and others.

"On Friday last, the day named by Mr. Forrest, this gratifying testimonial of regard for an individual whose character as a citizen, not less than his genius as an actor, has insured for him general respect, was carried into effect at the City Hotel. The repast provided for the occasion by Mr. Jennings, the accomplished director of that establishment, displayed all that taste and splendor for which his entertainments are remarkable. At six o'clock a very numerous company, comprising a large number of our most distinguished and talented citizens, sat down to the table. The Honorable Wm. T. McCoun, Vice-Chancellor, presided, assisted by General Prosper M. Wetmore, Mr. Justice Lownds, and Alderman Geo. D. Strong as Vice-Presidents. On the right of the President was seated the guest in whose honor the feast was provided, and on his left the Honorable Cornelius W. Lawrence, Mayor of the City. Among the guests were the managers of the several principal theatres in the United States in which the genius of Mr. Forrest has been most frequently exercised, together with several of the most esteemed members of the theatrical profession; among them the veteran Cooper and the inimitable and estimable Placide.

"On the removal of the cloth the following regular toasts were proposed:

"REGULAR TOASTS.

"1. *The Drama.*—The mirror of nature, in which life, like Narcissus, delights to contemplate its own image.

"2. *Shakspeare.*—Like his own Banquo, 'father of a line of kings'—monarchs who rule with absolute sway the passions and sympathies of the human heart.

"Previous to offering the third toast, the chairman, Chancellor McCoun, addressed the company in the following terms:

"To your kindness and partiality, gentlemen, I owe it that the pleasing duty devolves upon me of consummating the object for which we are this day met together. To render a suitable acknowledgment to worth is one of the most grateful employments of generous minds. But with how much more alacrity is such an office undertaken when the worth is of so mingled a character that it equally commands the admiration of our intellects and the applause of our hearts, and when it is to be exercised not for merit of foreign growth and already stamped with foreign approbation, but for the offspring of our own soil and nursed into fame by our own encouragement.

"Eight years ago a youth came to this city unheralded and almost unknown. His first introduction to the community was through one of those acts of kindness on his part by which his whole subsequent career has been distinguished. To add a few dollars to the slender means of a poor but industrious and worthy native actor, this youth, his diffidence overcome by his sympathy, appeared in the arduous character of Othello before a metropolitan audience. What was the astonishment and delight of the spectators when, instead of a raw and ungainly tyro, they beheld one who needed only a few finishing touches to render him the peer of the proudest in his art! A rival theatre was then rapidly rising under the superintendence of a man who has had few superiors as a director of the mimic world of the stage. To this theatre the unheralded youth (now the 'observed of all observers') was speedily transferred, and during the most brilliant period of its history was its 'bright particular star.' Allured by the strange and attractive light, the wealth, the talent, the fashion and respectability of the city nightly crowded its benches. The carriages of the luxurious were drawn up in long retinue before its doors, and the laborious left their tasks and repaired in throngs to sit entranced beneath the actor's potent spell. Not Goodman's Fields, when Garrick burst, a kindred prodigy, on the astonished London audience, displayed nightly a gayer scene nor resounded with heartier plaudits.

"Such success naturally elicited from rival theatres the most splendid offers; yet, though earning a poor stipend and held but by a verbal tie, this honorable boy—his prospects altered but his mind the same—gave promptly such replies as showed that he

valued integrity at its proper price. I shall be pardoned for thus adverting to one such instance among the many that might be adduced as finely illustrative of his character to whose honor it is mentioned.

"The time soon came, however, when he began to reap a harvest of profit as well as fame. And one of the first uses to which he turned his prosperity was to arouse the dramatic talent of his countrymen. The fruits of his liberality and judgment are several of the most popular and meritorious tragedies which have been produced on the modern stage. One of them, wholly American in its character and incidents, has been performed more frequently and with more advantage to the theatres than any other play in the same period of time on either side of the Atlantic. Though not without defects as a drama, it has the merit of presenting a strong and natural portrait of one of the most remarkable warriors of a race the last relics of which are fast melting away before the advancing tide of civilization. Yet, whatever the intrinsic qualities of the production, no one has witnessed it without feeling that its popularity is mainly to be ascribed to the bold, faithful, and spirited personation of the principal character; and, as the original of Metamora died with King Philip, so his scenic existence will terminate with the actor who introduced him to the stage. Among the other dramatic productions which the same professional perspicuity and generous feeling gave rise to are two or three of extraordinary merit. One of them, The Gladiator, for scenic effect, strongly-marked and well-contrasted characters, and fine nervous language, is surpassed by few dramas of modern times.

"But while this young actor was thus encouraging with liberal hand the literary genius of our countrymen, many an admiring audience beheld through the medium of his personations the noblest creations of the noblest bards of the Old World 'live o'er the scene' in all that reality which only acting gives.

> "'Tis by the mighty actor brought,
> Illusion's perfect triumphs come;
> Verse ceases to be airy thought,
> And sculpture to be dumb.'

"Gentlemen, I have thus far dwelt on points in this performer's

history and character with which you are all acquainted. There are other topics on which I might touch—did I not fear to invade the sanctuary of the heart—not less entitled to your admiration. But there are some feelings in breasts of honor and delicacy which, though commendable, cannot brook exposure; as there are plants which flourish in the caves of ocean that wither when brought to the light of day. I shall therefore simply say that in his private relations, as in his public career, he has *performed well his part*, and made esteem a twin sentiment with admiration in every heart that knows him. I need not tell you, gentlemen, that I speak of EDWIN FORREST.

"Mr. Forrest is on the eve of departure for foreign lands. To a man combining so many claims on our regard, it has been thought proper by his fellow-citizens to present a farewell token of friendship and respect,—a token which may at once serve to keep him mindful that Americans properly appreciate the genius and worth of their own land, and which may testify to foreigners the high place he holds in our esteem.

"Mr. FORREST, I now place this memorial in your hands. It is one in which many of your countrymen have been emulous to bear a part. It is a proud proof of unusual virtues and talents, and as such may be proudly worn. You will mingle in throngs where jewelled insignia glitter on titled breasts; but yours may justly be the reflection that few badges of distinction are the reward of qualities so deserving of honor as those attested by the humbler memorial which now rests upon your bosom.

"Gentlemen, I propose to you,—

"EDWIN FORREST—Estimable for his virtues, admirable for his talents. Good wishes attend his departure, and warm hearts will greet his return.

"The speaker was interrupted at different points of his address with the most enthusiastic applause, and on its conclusion the apartment resounded with unanimous, hearty, and prolonged cheers, attesting at once the concurrence of his hearers in the justness of his sentiments and their sense of the happy and eloquent language in which they were conveyed. When this applause at length subsided, Mr. Forrest rose, and in a style of simple and

unaffected modesty returned his acknowledgments in a speech, of which we believe the following is nearly an accurate report:

"Mr. President and Gentlemen,—A member of a profession which brings me nightly to speak before multitudes, it might seem affectation in me to express how much I am overcome by these distinguishing marks of your kindness and approbation. I stand not now before you to repeat the sentiments of the dramatist, but in my own poor phrase to give utterance to feelings which even the language of poetry could not too strongly embody; and I feel this evening how much easier it is to counterfeit emotions on the mimic scene of the stage than to repress the real and embarrassing yet grateful agitation which this rich token of your favor has occasioned. My thanks must therefore be rendered in the most simple and unstudied language, for I feel 'I am no actor here.'

"You have made allusion in terms of flattering kindness to a period of my life I can never contemplate without emotions of the most thrilling and pleasurable nature,—a period which beheld me, with a suddenness of transition more like a dream than reality, one day a poor, unknown, and unfriended boy, and the next surrounded by 'troops of friends,' counsellors ready to advise, and generous hearts prodigal of regard. In my immature and unschooled efforts lenient critics saw, or thought they saw, some latent evidences of talent, and, with a generosity rarely equalled, crowded around me with encouragement in payment of anticipated desert. The same spirit of kindness which matured the germ continued its fostering influence through each successive development; and now, at the end of eight years (eight *little* years,—how brief they have been made by you!), with unexhausted, nay, increasing munificence, that spirit exercises itself in bestowing a memento of esteem as much beyond the deserts of the man as its early plaudits exceeded the merits of the boy.

"If, in the course of a career by you made both pleasant and prosperous, I have appropriated a portion of your bounty to the encouragement of dramatic literature, I have, as it were, acted as your almoner, and have found my reward in the readiness with which you have extended in its support the same cherishing hand that sustained me in my youthful efforts. One of the writers

whose services, at my invitation, were given to the drama, after having proved his ability by the production of a play the popularity of which you have not exaggerated, lies in a recent and untimely grave. The other, to whose noble Roman tragedy you have also particularly alluded, is now pursuing a successful career of literature in another land; and it is a source of no little pleasure to think that I have been in some measure instrumental in calling into exercise a mind which, if I do not overestimate its powers, will add a fresh leaf to that unfading chaplet with which Irving and Cooper and Bryant and Halleck, with a few other kindred spirits, have already graced the escutcheon of our country.

"One allusion in your remarks has awakened emotions of the keenest sensibility. It brings home to me more strongly than all the rest how *deeply* I am indebted to you; for you have not only strewn my own path with flowers, but enabled me to discharge with efficiency the obligations of nature to orphan sisters and a widowed parent. To you I owe it that after a period of adversity I have been permitted to render her latter days pleasant 'and rock the cradle of reposing age.' So far, however, from any compliment being due to me on this score, I may rather chide myself with having fallen short in my filial duties. Yet were it otherwise, how could he be less than a devoted son and affectionate brother who has experienced parental kindness and fraternal friendship *from a whole community?*

"This token of your regard I need not tell you how dearly I shall prize. I am about to visit foreign lands. In a few months I shall probably behold the tomb of Garrick,—Garrick, the pupil of Johnson, the companion and friend of statesmen and wits,—Garrick, who now sleeps surrounded by the relics of kings and heroes, orators and bards, the magnates of the earth. I shall contemplate the mausoleum which encloses the remains of Talma,—Talma, the familiar friend of him before whom monarchs trembled. I shall tread that classic soil with which is mingled the dust of Roscius,—of Roscius, the preceptor of Cicero, whose voice was lifted for him at the forum and whose tears were shed upon his grave. While I thus behold with feelings of deferential awe the last resting-places of those departed monarchs of the drama, how will my bosom kindle with pride at the reflection that I, so inferior in desert, have yet been honored with a token as proud

as ever rewarded their most successful efforts! I shall then look upon this memorial; but, while my eye is riveted within its 'golden round,' my mind will travel back to this scene and this hour, and my heart be with you in my native land.

"Mr. President, in conclusion, let me express my grateful sense of your goodness by proposing as a sentiment,—

"*The Citizens of New York*—Distinguished not more by intelligence, enterprise, and integrity than by that generous and noble spirit which welcomes the stranger and succors the friendless.

"This speech was delivered with remarkable feeling and dignity, and received the most earnest applause of every one present. The regular toasts were continued.

"3. *Talent and Worth*—The only stars and garters of our nobility.

"4. *Hallam and Henry*—The Columbus and Vespucius of the Drama,—who planted its standard in the New World.

"5. *Garrick and Kean*—The one a fixed and ever-shining light of the stage; the other an erratic star, which dazzled men by its brightness and perplexed them by its wanderings.

"6. *Kemble and Talma*—Their genius has identified their memory with the undying fame of Shakspeare and Racine.

"7. *George Frederick Cooke*—A link furnished by the Stage to connect the Old World with the New. Britain nursed his genius, America sepulchres his remains.

"8. *The Dramatic Genius of our Country*—'The ruddy brightness of its rise gives token of a goodly day.'

"These sentiments having evoked suitable responses, letters were read from the manager of the Park Theatre and a famous American comedian.

"THEATRE, July 24, 1834.

"GENTLEMEN,—I received your kind invitation to the dinner to be given by his friends to Mr. Forrest on Friday, 25th instant, and sincerely regret that professional duties will prevent my having the pleasure of attending it. I regret my absence for more than one reason, as nothing would give me greater pleasure than to witness so gratifying a tribute of respect paid to a man to whom the stage is under so many obligations. I do not allude to his talents, splendid as they are, but to the effect that his

exemplary good conduct and uniform respectability of private character must have on the profession. I trust that the honor conferred on Mr. Forrest on that day will induce many of our brethren to follow his example, and serve to convince them that the profession of an actor will never disgrace the professor if the professor does not disgrace the profession.

"With much respect, gentlemen, I remain your obedient servant,

"E. SIMPSON.

"JAMAICA, L.I., 24th July, 1834.

"GENTLEMEN,—I have the honor of acknowledging your highly flattering invitation to be present at a dinner to be given by the friends of Mr. Forrest on Friday next at the City Hotel, but find to-day that imperative and unalterable circumstances will prevent my being in town; else, be assured, no one would have heartier pleasure in being present on any occasion of paying a tribute of public respect to so estimable a friend and deservedly distinguished an actor as our countryman, Edwin Forrest, Esq.

"Allow me to thank the highly-respected gentlemen you represent, and yourselves individually, for the esteemed compliment extended to me on this interesting and patriotic occasion.

"I have the honor to be, gentlemen, your very obliged servant,

"JAMES H. HACKETT.

"Among the numerous volunteer toasts drank in the course of the evening were the following:

"*By the President*—William Dunlap: to him the American stage owes a threefold debt. Its director, his liberality elevated it into consequence. Its dramatist, his genius peopled it with admired creations. Its historian, he has embalmed the memory of its professors and given permanence to their fame.

"*By the First Vice-President*—Nature and Art: the stage has united the antipodes of philosophy.

"*By the Third Vice-President*—The Drama: the handmaid of refinement; may the genius that conceives and the talent that embodies her fair creations blend the dignity of virtue with the allurements of fancy!

"*By the Hon. Cornelius W. Lawrence*—The Stage: talent may distinguish, but virtue elevates, its professors.

"*By Thomas A. Cooper*—The Histrionic Art: may it prove triumphant over the attacks of priestcraft and fanaticism!—equally inimical to religion and the stage.

"*By Nathaniel Greene, of Boston*—A kind welcome and just estimate for foreign talent,—a proud confidence in that of native growth.

"*By William Leggett*—Shakspeare: a conqueror greater than Alexander. The warrior's victories were bounded by the earth, and he vainly wept for other worlds to conquer. The poet 'exhausted worlds, and then imagined new.'"

The festivities were maintained with the greatest zest till early morning, when the company broke up in unalloyed pleasure, leaving with their guest the recollection of an occasion of the most flattering nature. And shortly afterwards, when he embarked, sixty or seventy of his closest friends went several miles down the harbor in a yacht. Among them were Leggett and Halleck. Leggett, between whom and Forrest had grown a love as ardent and heroic as that of the famed antique examples, threw his arms around him with a tearful "God bless and keep you!" Halleck said, "May you have hundreds of beautiful hours in beautiful places, and come back to us the same as you go away, only enriched!" Forrest replied, pressing his hand, "That is indeed the wish of a poet for his friend. You may be sure when I am at Marathon, at Athens, at Constantinople, I shall often recall your lines on Marco Bozzaris, and be delighted to link with them the memory of this your parting benediction."

His friends did not say good-bye until they had through their spokesman commended him to the special graces of the captain. Then, wishing him a happy voyage, they joined hands, gave him twenty-four cheers, and sailed reluctantly apart, they to their wonted ways, he to a foreign continent.

Leaving him on the deck, with folded arms, his chin on his breast, gazing sadly at the receding West, we will now endeavor to form a just estimate of his acting in his favorite characters at that time. We will try to paint him livingly, just as he was in that fresh period of his popularity and glory, the proud young giant and democrat of the American Stage.

CHAPTER IX.

SENSATIONAL AND ARTISTIC ACTING.—CHARACTERS OF PHYSICAL AND MENTAL REALISM.—ROLLA.—TELL.—DAMON.—BRUTUS.—VIRGINIUS.—SPARTACUS.—METAMORA.

A NATION beginning its career as a colony is naturally dependent on the parent country for its earliest examples in culture. Some time must elapse; wealth, leisure, and other conditions favorable to spiritual enrichment and free aspiration must be developed, before it can create ideals of its own and achieve æsthetic triumphs in accordance with them. Such was the case with America. Its mental dependence on England continued long after its civil allegiance had ceased. Little by little, however, the colonial temper and servile habit were repudiated in one province after another of the national activity. Jefferson was our first audacious and fruitful original thinker in politics. In painting, Stuart arose as a bold and profound master, with no teacher but nature. In fiction, Cooper opened a rich field, and reaped a harvest of imperishable renown. In religion, the inspired genius of Channing appeared with a leavening impulse which still works. And in poetry, Bryant was the earliest who treated indigenous themes with a distinction which has made his name ineffaceable.

In no other region of the national life was the colonial dependence so complete and so prolonged as in the drama. The chief plays and actors alike were imported. Scarcely did anything else dare to lift its head on the theatrical boards. All was servile imitation or lifeless reproduction, until Forrest fought his way to the front, burst into fame, and by the conspicuous brilliance of his success heralded a new day for his profession in this country. Forrest, as an eloquent writer said a quarter of a century ago, was the first great native actor who brought to the illustration of Shakspeare and other poets a genius essentially American and at the same time individual,—a genius distinguished by its freedom from all trammels and subservience to schools, by its force

in a self-reliance which seemed loyalty to nature, and by its freshness in an ideal which gave to all his efforts a certain moral elevation,—a genius which, after every deduction, still remained as a something peculiarly noble and enkindling, highly original in itself, and distinctively American. This is certainly his historic place; and it was perhaps more fortunate than calamitous that he was left in his early years so largely without teachers and without models, to develop his own resources in his early wanderings as a strolling player in the West by direct experience of the soul within him and direct observation of the impassioned unconventional life about him. He was thus forced to shape out of the mint of his own nature the form and stamp and coloring of his conceptions. There was fitness and significance in such a genius as his maturing and pouring itself out under the shade of the Western woods, rising up amid their grandeur clear and simple as a spring, till, fed and strengthened, it leaped forth fresh and thundering as a torrent.

In characterizing Forrest as a tragedian by the epithet American, it is necessary that we should understand what is meant by the word in such a connection. We mean that he was an intense ingrained democrat. Democracy asserts the superiority of man to his accidents. Its genius is contemptuous of titular claims or extrinsic conditions in comparison with intrinsic truth and merit. Its glance pierces through all pompous circumstances and pretences, to the personal reality of the man. If that be royal and divine, it is ready to worship; if not, it pays no false or hollow tribute, no matter what outward prestige of attraction there may be or what clamor of threats. That is the proper temper and historic ideal of our republic; and that was Forrest in the very centre of his soul, both as a man and as an actor.

But his individuality was in the general sense as deeply and positively human as it was American or democratic. That is to say, he was an affirmative, believing, sympathetic character, not a skeptical, negative, or sneering one. He so vividly loved in their plain and concrete reality his own parents, brothers and sisters, friends, native land, that he could give vivid expression to such sentiments in abstract generality without galvanizing his nerves with any artificial volition. His affections preponderated over his antipathies. He was not fond of badinage, but full of

downright earnestness. He loved the sense of being, enjoyed it, was grateful for its privileges, and delighted to contemplate the phenomena of society. He had the keenest love for little children, and the deepest reverence for old age. He valued the goods of life highly, and labored to accumulate them. He had a vivid sensibility for the beauties of nature. He had an enthusiastic admiration of great men, and a ruling desire for the prizes of honor and fame. His soul thrilled at the recital of glorious deeds, and his tears started at a great thought or a sublime image or a tender sentiment. Friendship for man, love for woman, a kindling patriotism, a profound feeling of the domestic ties, a burning passion for liberty, and an unaffected reverence for God, were dominant chords in his nature. He had no patience with those vapid weaklings, those disappointed aspirants or negative dreamers, who think everything on earth a delusion or a temptation, nature a cheat, man a phantom or a fool, history a toy, life a wretched chaos, death an unknown horror, and nothing between worth an effort. He was, on the contrary, a wholesome realist, full of throbbing vitality and eagerness, embracing the natural goods of existence with a sharp relish, and putting a worshipful estimate on the ideal glories of humanity. Intellect, instinct, and affection in him were all alive,—free and teeming springs of personal power. This rich fulness of positive life and passion in himself both opened to him the elemental secrets of experience and enabled him to play effectively on the sympathies of other men.

Let such a man, trained under such circumstances, endowed with a magnificent physique, overflowing with energy and fire, become an actor, and it is easy to see what will be the leading ideal exemplified in his personations. Exactly what this dominant ideal was will be illustrated in the descriptions which are to follow. But a clear statement of it in advance will aid us the better to appreciate those descriptions.

The rank of any work of art is determined by the ideal expressed in it, and the accuracy of its expression. As has been well said, no art better illustrates this fact than the art of acting. Take, for instance, the genius of Kemble. His ideal was authority. He was never so impressive as in the illustration of a king or ruler. In Coriolanus, in Macbeth, in Wolsey, in every character that gave opportunity for it, he was ever expressing the sense of

mental or official power as the noblest of human attributes. So the ideal of Cooke was skepticism. He was always best as a social infidel, uttering the bitterest sarcasms. It was this faculty that rendered his Man of the World so great a triumph. The ideal of Kean, again, was retribution. He was grandest as the sufferer and avenger of great wrongs. And the ideal of Macready was that of Kemble modified by its more fretful and impatient expression, making him ever most effective in the display of some form of pride or wounded honor, as in Werner, Richelieu, Melantius.

In distinction from the special ideals of these and the other most celebrated tragedians of the past, the ideal of Forrest was unquestionably the democratic ideal of universal manhood, a deep sense of natural and moral heroism, sincerity, friendship, and faith. This imperial self-reliance and instinctive honesty, this unperverted and unterrified personality poised in the grandest natural virtues of humanity, is the key-note or common chord to the whole range of his conceptions, on which all their varieties are modulated, from Rolla and Tell to Metamora and Spartacus, from Damon and Brutus to Othello and Lear. Fearless, faithful manhood penetrates them all, is the great elevating principle which makes them harmonies of one essential ideal. To have exemplified so sublime an ideal, in so many grand forms, each as clearly defined as a sculptured statue, during a half-century, before applauding millions of his countrymen, is what stamps Forrest and makes him worthy of his fame, singling him out in the rising epoch of his country's greatness as one of the most imposing and not unworthiest of her types of nationality.

There are two contrasted styles of the dramatic art which have long been recognized and discriminated in the two schools of acting, the Romantic and the Classic. Before proceeding to the best rôles of Forrest in his earlier period, it is indispensable that we clearly seize the essence of the distinction between these two schools. Otherwise we shall fail to see the originality and importance of the relation in which he stood to them.

The one school, in its separate purity, is sensational or natural, exhibiting characters of physical and mental realism; the other is reflective or artistic, representing characters of imaginative portraiture. The former springs from strong and sincere im-

pulses, the latter from clear and mastered perceptions. That is based on the instincts and passions, and is predominantly imitative or reproductive; this rests on the intellect and imagination, and is predominantly creative. The one projects the thing in reflex life, as it exists in reality; the other reveals it, as in a glass. That is nature brought alive on the stage; this is art repeating nature refined at one mental remove. They resemble and contrast each other as the hurtless image of the bird mirrored in the lake would correspond with its concrete cause above, could it, while yet remaining a mere reflection, address our other senses as it now does the eye alone. The sensational acting of crude nature is characteristically sympathetic and mimetic in its origin, enslaved, expensive of force, and mainly seated in the nervous centres of the body. The artistic acting of the accomplished master is characteristically spiritual and self-creative in its origin, free, economical of exertion, and mainly seated in the nervous centres of the brain. The one actor lives his part, and is the character he represents; the other plays his part, and truly portrays the character he imagines.

The Classic style is self-controlled, stately, deliberately does what it consciously predetermines to do, trusts as much to the expressive power of attitudes and poses as to facial changes and voice. It elaborates its rôle by systematic critical study, leaving nothing to chance, to caprice, or to instinct. The Romantic style permeates itself with the situations and feeling of its rôle, and then is full of impetuosity and abandon, giving free vent to the passions of the part and open swing to the energies of the performer. The one is marked by careful consistency and studious finish, the other by impulsive truth, abrupt force, electric bursts. That abounds in the refinements of polished art, this abounds in the sensational effects of aroused and uncovered nature. The former is adapted to delight the cultivated Few, the latter thrills the unsophisticated Many.

Now, it was the originality of Forrest that he combined in a most fresh and impressive manner the fundamental characteristics of both these schools,—in his first period with an undoubted preponderance of the characters of physical realism, but in his second period with an unquestionable preponderance of the characters of imaginative portraiture. He was from the first both an artistic and

a sensational actor. None of his great predecessors ever came upon the stage with conceptions more patiently studied, wrought up with a more complete consistency in every part, or with the perspective, the foreshortening, the lights and shades, arranged with more conscientious fidelity. His idea of a character might sometimes, perhaps, be questioned, but the clearness with which he grasped his idea, and the thorough harmony with which he put it forth and sustained it, could not be questioned. In this respect he was one of the most consummate of dramatic artists. And as for the other side of the picture, the spontaneous sincerity and irresistible force of his demonstrations of the great passions of the human heart were almost unprecedented in the effects they wrought.

In an accurate use of the words, sensational acting would be acting that took its origin in the senses and passed thence through the muscles without the intervention of the mind. This is the acting learned by the parrot, the dog, or the monkey, and by the mere mimic. Artistic acting, on the other hand, is acting which originates in the creative mind and is freely sent thence through the proper channels of expression. The true definition of art is *feeling passed through thought and fixed in form.* When the intellectualized feeling is fixed in its just form, it should be made over to the automatic nerves, and the brain be relieved from the care of its oversight and direction. Then playing becomes beautiful, because it is at ease in unconscious spontaneity. Otherwise, it often becomes repulsive to the delicate observer, because it is laborious. This was the one defect of Forrest which lamed him in the supreme height of his great art. His brain continued to do the work. There was often too much volition in his play, causing a muscular friction and an organic expense which made the sensitive shrink, and which only the robust could afford. But no one was more completely an artist in always passing his emotions through his thought, knowing exactly what he meant to do and how he would do it.

The word melodramatic properly describes an action in which the movement is physical rather than mental, and in which more is made of the interest of the situations than of the revelation of the characters. For example, the pantomimic expression of great passions is melodramatic. In this sense Forrest often produced

the highest effects where the subject and the scene, the logic of the situation, required it. But in the popular sense of the term, which makes it synonymous with crudity and falsity, hollow extravagance, a vulgar aiming at a sensation by exaggeration or artifices which disregard the harmonious fitness of things, no actor could be more free from the vice. He was always sincere, always earnest, always careful of the sustained congruity of his representation. And within these limits, surely the more intense the sensation he could produce, the better. Sensation is the very thing desired in attending a play. The spectators know enough for their present purpose; they want to be made to feel more keenly, more purely, more nobly. Power and perfection on the lowest level are superior to weakness and failure on that level, and are not incompatible with power and perfection on all the higher levels, but rather tributary to them. Did we not desire to be strong rather than weak, to be handsome rather than ugly, to be admired rather than scorned, all aspiration would cease, and the human race stagnate and end. To be capable of such astounding outbursts of power and passion as to electrify all who behold, curdle their very marrow, and cause them ever after to remember you with wondering interest and fruitful imitation, is a glorious endowment, worthy of our envy. To sneer at it as sensationalism gives proof of a mean disposition or a morbid soul.

In the same sense in which Forrest was melodramatic, God and Nature themselves are so. What can be more genuinely sensational than Niagara, Mont Blanc, the earthquake, the tempest, the forked flash of the lightning, the crashing roll of the thunder, the crouch of the tiger, the dart of the anaconda, the shriek of the swooping eagle, the prance of the war-horse in his proud pomp? And the attributes of all these belong to man, with additions of nameless grandeur, terror, and beauty beside, making him an incarnate representative of God on the earth. To see Forrest in Lear, or Salvini in Saul, is to feel this. True sensationalism, banished in our tame times from the selfish and servile walks of common life, is the very desideratum and glory of the Stage.

ROLLA.

One of the first characters in which Forrest enjoyed great popularity was that of Rolla, the Peruvian hero. The play of

"The Spaniards in Peru," by Kotzebue, as rewritten by Sheridan from a paraphrase in English, was for a long time a favorite with the public. It brought the adventurers and wonderful achievements of the most romantic kingdom in Christendom into picturesque combination with the strange scenes, simplicity, and superstition of the newly-discovered transatlantic world, and was full of music, pomp, pictures, poetic situations, and processions. In literary style, the knowing critics call it tawdry and bombastic; in ethical tone, sentimental and inflated. But the average audiences, especially of a former generation, were not fastidious censors. They went to the theatre less to judge and sneer than to be moved with sympathy, enjoyment, and admiration. And they found this play rich in strong appeals to the better instincts of their moral nature. What the blasé found turgid, affected, or ludicrous, the unsophisticated felt to be eloquent, poetic, and noble. For the fair appreciation of a piece of acting, assuredly this latter point of view is preferable to the former; for tragedy is a form of poetry, and has as one of its purest functions the revelation of the moral ingredients of man, lifted, enlarged, and glorified in its mirror of art.

Rolla is depicted as simple, grand, a nobleman of nature, frank, ardent, impulsive, magnanimous,—his own truth and heroism investing him with an invisible robe and crown of royalty. It was a rôle precisely adapted to the young tragedian whose own soul it so well reflected. Endowed with all the chivalrous sentiments, expansive and kindling, uncurbed by the nil admirari standards of fashionable breeding, he could fill up every extravagant phrase of the part without any feeling of extravagance.

Pizarro and his followers are pictured throughout the play in an odious light, as tyrants assailing the Peruvians without provocation and slaughtering them without mercy. The sympathies of Las Casas and of the noble Alonzo have been alienated from their own countrymen and transferred to the barbarians, who are represented in the most favorable colors as honest, affectionate, brave, standing in defence of their liberty and their altars. Alonzo, disgusted and shocked by the atrocities of Pizarro, has joined the Peruvians, and has been placed in conjunction with Rolla at the head of their forces. The aged Orozembo, seized by the Spaniards and brought before their leader, is questioned, "Who is this

Rolla joined with Alonzo in command?" He replies, "I will answer that; for I love to repeat the hero's name. Rolla, the kinsman of the king, is the idol of our army; in war, a tiger; in peace, more gentle than the lamb. Cora was once betrothed to him; but, finding she preferred Alonzo, he resigned his claim, to friendship and her happiness." Pizarro exclaims, "Romantic savage! I shall meet this Rolla soon." "Thou hadst better not," replies Orozembo; "the terrors of his eye would strike thee dead."

In the next scene the way is still further prepared for the impression of his appearance. His beloved Alonzo and Cora are discerned playing with their child in front of a wood. They talk of Rolla, of his sacrifice for them, and of his noble qualities. Shouts arise, when Alonzo says, "It is Rolla setting the guard. He comes." At that instant the sonorous tones of his voice are heard from outside the stage, like the martial clang of a trumpet, uttering the words, "Place them on the hill fronting the Spanish camp." Every eye is fixed, the whole audience lean forward as he enters, and in a flash the magnetic spell is on them, and they breathe and feel as one man. The stately ease of his athletic port, his deep square chest, broad shoulders, and columnar neck, his frank brow, with the mild, glowing, open eyes, the warm blood mantling the brave and wooing face, seize the collective sympathy of the assembly, and they break into wild cheering. He seems to stand there, in his barbaric costume and majestic attitude, as a romantic picture stereoscoped by nature herself. And when, in reply to the exclamation of Alonzo, "Rolla, my friend, my benefactor, how can our lives repay the obligations which we owe thee?" he says, "Pass them in peace and bliss; let Rolla witness it, and he is overpaid,"—the very soul of friendship and nobility seems to flow in the sweet music of his liquid gutturals, and the charm is complete.

From this point onward to the close all was moulded and wrought up in perfect keeping. He had fashioned to himself a complete image of what Rolla should be in accordance with the conception in the play, his carriage, walk, and attitudes, his style of gesture, his physiognomy, his tone and habit of voice. He had imprinted this idea so deeply in his brain, and had trained himself so carefully to its consistent manifestation, that his portrayal on the stage had all the unity of design and precision of

detail which characterize the work of a masterly painter. Instead of using canvas, pigment, and brush, he painted his part in the air in living pantomime. In all his rôles this was his manner more and more up to the crowning period of his career.

He gave extraordinary effectiveness to the famous address which Rolla pronounces to the Peruvian warriors on the eve of battle, by the manly truth and simplicity of his delivery,—"My brave associates, partners of my toil, my feelings, and my fame." Instead of launching forth in a swollen and mechanical declamation, he spoke with the straightforward truth and the varied and hearty inflection of nature; and his honest earnestness woke responsive echoes in every breast. Like Macklin and Garrick on the English stage, Talma on the French, and Devrient on the German, Forrest on the American was a bold and original innovator on the inveterate elocutionary mannerism of actors embodied in what is universally known as theatrical delivery. For the mouthing formality, the torpid noisiness, the strained monotony and forced cadences of the routine players, these men of genius substituted—only enlarging the scale of power—the abruptness, the changes, the conversational vivacity of tone, emphasis, and inflection, which are natural to a free man with a free voice played upon by the genuine passions of life. This was one of the chief excellences and attractions of Forrest throughout his professional course. He was ever a man uttering thoughts and sentiments,—not an elocutionist displaying his trade.

Alonzo, filled with a presentiment of death, charged his friend, in such an event, to take Cora for his wife and adopt their child. Rolla, finding after the battle that Alonzo was a prisoner, repeated his parting message to his wife. Cora's suspicion was aroused, and she accused him of deserting his friend for the sake of securing her. Then was shown a fine picture of contending emotions in Rolla. Disinterested and heroic to the last degree, to be charged with such baseness, and that, too, by the woman whom he loved and revered,—it stung him to the quick. Injured honor, proud indignation, mortified affection, and magnanimous resolution were seen flying from his soul through his form and face. He determines to rescue Alonzo by piercing to his prison and assuming his place. Disguised as a monk, he asks the sentinel to admit him to the prisoner. Being refused, he tries to bribe the sentinel.

This fails, and he appeals to him by nobler motives, revealing himself as the friend of Alonzo, who has come to bear his last words to his wife and child. The sentinel relents. Rolla lifts his eyes to heaven, and says, "O holy Nature, thou dost never plead in vain!" and rushes into the arms of his friend. After an earnest controversy, Alonzo changes dress with him, and escapes, Rolla exclaiming, with a sigh of satisfaction, "Now, Cora, didst thou not wrong me? This is the first time I ever deceived man. If I am wrong, forgive me, God of Truth!"

All this was done with a sincerity and energy irresistibly contagious. And when Elvira has armed him with a dagger and led him to the couch of the sleeping Pizarro, when, instead of slaying his foe, he wakens him and drops the weapon, showing how superior a heathen can be to a Christian, and when the tyrant calls in his guards and orders them to seize the hapless Elvira, the contrast of the confronting Rolla and Pizarro, the example of godlike magnanimity and its foil of unnatural depravity, stands in an illumination of moral splendor that thrills every heart.

Two more scenes remained to carry the triumph of Forrest in the part to its culmination. The child of Alonzo and Cora, in ignorance of who he is, has been captured by the Spanish soldiers, and is brought in. Pizarro bids them toss the Peruvian imp into the sea. With a start and look of alternating horror and love, Rolla cries, "Gracious Heaven, it is Alonzo's child!" "Ha!" exclaims Pizarro: "welcome, thou pretty hostage. Now is Alonzo again in my power." After vain expostulation, Rolla prostrates himself before the cruel captain, saying, "Behold me at thy feet, thy willing slave, if thou wilt release the child." Other actors, including the cold and stately Kemble, as they spoke these words, sank directly on their knees. But Forrest introduced a by-play of startling power, full of the passionate warmth of nature. Regarding Pizarro with an amazement made of surprise and scorn waxing into noble anger, he is seen making the strongest exertion to refrain from rushing on the tyrant and striking him down. He begins to kneel. Half-way in the slow descent, repugnance to stoop his manhood before such baseness checks him, and he partly rises, when a glance at the child overcomes his hesitation, and he sinks swiftly on his knees. The Spaniard replies, "Rolla,

thou art free to go; the boy remains." With the rapidity of lightning, Rolla snatches the child and lifts him over his left shoulder, and, waving his sword, cries, in clarion accents, "Who moves one step to follow me dies on the spot!" He strikes down three of the guards who oppose him, and rushes across a bridge at the back of the stage. The soldiers fire, and a shot strikes him as he vanishes with the child held proudly aloft. The view changes to the Peruvian court. The king is seen with his nobles, and with Alonzo and Cora distracted at the loss of their child. Shouts are heard. "Rolla! Rolla!" The hero staggers in, bleeding, ghastly, and faint, and places the child in its mother's arms, with an exquisite touch of nature first drawing the little face down to his own and planting a kiss on it, staining it from his bleeding wounds in the act. She exclaims, "Oh, God, there is blood upon him!" He replies, "'Tis mine, Cora." Alonzo says, "Thou art dying, Rolla." He answers, faintly, "For thee and Cora." One long gasp, a wavering on his feet, a convulsion of his chest, and he sinks in an inanimate heap.

The truth and power with which all this was done were attested by the crowds that thronged to see it, their intense emotion, and the universal praise for many years awarded to it.

TELL.

Another chosen part of Forrest, in which he was received with extraordinary favor, was that of William Tell. This play, like the former, had a basis of untutored love and magnanimity; but the romantic heroism of the character was less remote to the American mind, less strained in ideality, than that of Rolla. The plot was simpler, the language more eloquent, domestic love more prominent, and patriotic enthusiasm more emphatic. In fact, the three constant keys of the action are parental affection, ardent attachment to native land, and the burning passion for liberty, corresponding with three central elements of strength in the personality of the actor now drawn to the part with a hungry instinct.

In preparation for this rôle, Forrest had first the native congruity of his own soul with it. Then he studied the character in the text of Knowles with the utmost care, analyzing every speech and situation. Furthermore, he saturated his imagination with the spirit of the life and legends of Switzerland, by means of

histories, books of travel, and engravings, till its people and their customs, its torrents, ravines, pastures, chalets, cloud-capped peaks, and storms, were distinct and real to him. In the next place, he paid great attention to his make-up, arraying himself in a garb scrupulously accurate to the fashion of a Switzer peasant and huntsman.

No actor placed greater stress on a fitting costume than Forrest. He knew its subtle influences as well as its more obvious effects. The more vital unity and sensitiveness we have, the more important each adjunct to our personality becomes. A man who is a sloppy mess of fragments is not influenced much by anything, and in return does not much influence anything; but to a man whose body and soul form, as it were, one vascular piece, the action and reaction between him and everything with which he is in close relation is of great consequence. The dress of such a person is another self, corresponding in some sort with the outer man as his skin does with the inner man.

When Forrest came upon the stage with his bow and quiver, belted tunic and tight buskins, with free, elastic bearing, and high tread, deep-breathing breast, resounding voice, his whole shape and moving moulded to the robust and sinewy manners of the archer living in the free, open airs between the grass and the snow, he was an embodied picture of the legendary Swiss mountaineer. At the first sight a keen sensation was produced in the audience, for it kindled all the enthusiastic associations fondly bound up with this image in the American imagination.

It is morning, the sunrise creeping down the flanks of the mountains and spreading over the lake and valley, in the background Albert shooting at a mark, as Tell appears in the distance returning from an early chase. Approaching, he sees the boy, and pauses to watch him shoot. Poised on a crag, leaning with eager gaze of fondness fixed on the little marksman, he looks like the statue of a chamois-hunter on the cliffs of Mont Blanc, carved and set there by some superhuman hand. Then the magic voice, breathing love blent in freedom, is heard:

> "Well aimed, young archer!
> There plays the skill will thin the chamois herd,
> And bring the lammergeyer from the cloud
> To earth; perhaps do greater feats,—perhaps

Make man its quarry, when he dares to tread
Upon his fellow-man. That little arm
May pull a sinewy tyrant from his seat,
And from their chains a prostrate people lift
To liberty. I'd be content to die,
Living to see that day. What, Albert!"

The lad, with a glad cry of "Ah, my father!" flies into his embrace, while in unison, from pit to gallery, a thousand hearts throb warmly.

One point of very great beauty and power in this tragedy is the remarkable manner in which the author has combined the impassioned love of national liberty with the impassioned love of the natural scenery associated with that liberty. To these numerous descriptions, marked by the highest declamatory merit, Forrest did ample justice with his magnificent voice.

Indeed, elocutionary force and felicity were ever a central charm in his acting. He did not thrust the gift ostentatiously forward for its own sake, but kept it subordinated to its uses. His first aim in vocal delivery was always to articulate the thought clearly,—make it stand out in unmistakable distinctness; his second, to breathe the true feeling of the words in his tones; his third, by rate, pitch, inflection, accent, and pause, to give some imaginative suggestion of the scenery, of the thought, and thus set it in its proper environment. In the first aim he rarely failed; in the second he generally succeeded; and he often triumphed in the third. One example, which no man of sensibility who heard him pronounce it could ever forget, was this:

"I have sat
In my boat at night, when, midway o'er the lake,
The stars went out, and down the mountain gorge
The wind came roaring,—I have sat and eyed
The thunder breaking from his cloud, and smiled
To see him shake his lightnings o'er my head,
And think I had no master save his own.
You know the jutting cliff, round which a track
Up hither winds, whose base is but the brow
To such another one, with scanty room
For two abreast to pass? O'ertaken there
By the mountain blast, I've laid me flat along,
And while gust followed gust more furiously,
As if to sweep me o'er the horrid brink,
And I have thought of other lands, whose storms

Are summer flaws to those of mine, and just
Have wished me there,—the thought that mine was free
Has checked that wish, and I have raised my head
And cried in thraldom to that furious wind,
Blow on! This is the land of liberty!"

And the following is another example, still happier in the climax of its eloquence:

"Scaling yonder peak,
I saw an eagle wheeling near its brow:
O'er the abyss his broad expanded wings
Lay calm and motionless upon the air,
As if he floated there without their aid,
By the sole act of his unlorded will,
That buoyed him proudly up. Instinctively
I bent my bow; yet kept he rounding still
His airy circle, as in the delight
Of measuring the ample range beneath
And round about: absorbed, he heeded not
The death that threatened him. I could not shoot—
'Twas liberty! I turned my bow aside,
And let him soar away."

Old Melctal, the father of Tell's wife, is led in by Albert, blind and trembling, his eyes having been plucked from their sockets by order of Gesler. As Tell, horror-struck, listened to the frightful story from the lips of the old man, the revelation of the feelings it stirred in him was one of the most genuine and moving pieces of emotional portraiture ever shown to an audience. It was an unveiled storm of contending pity, amazement, wrath, tenderness, tears, loathing, and revenge. Every muscle worked, his soul seemed wrapt and shaken with thunders and lightnings of passion, which alternately darkened and illumined his features, and he seemed going mad, until at last he seized his weapons and darted away in search of the monster whose presence profaned the earth, crying, as he went, "Father, thou shalt be revenged, thou shalt be revenged!" The power of this effort is shown in the fact that more than one critic compared his struggle with his own feelings under the narrative of Melctal to his subsequent struggle with the guards of Gesler, when, like a lion amidst a pack of curs, he hurled them in every direction, and held them at bay till overpowered by sheer numbers. The mental struggle was quite as visibly defined and terrible as the physical one.

In this play Forrest presented four successive examples of that

proud assertion of an independent, high-minded man which has been said to be the real type of his character as a tragedian. These specimens were differenced from one another with such clean strokes and bold colors that it was an æsthetic as well as a moral luxury to behold him enact them. The first was a trenchant, sarcastic scorn of baseness, spoken when he sees the servile peasants bow to Gesler's cap, and the hireling soldiery driving them to it:

"They do it, Verner;
They do it! Look! Ne'er call me man again!
Look, look! Have I the outline of that caitiff
Who to the outraged earth doth bend the head
His God did rear for him to heaven? Base pack!
Lay not your loathsome touch upon the thing
God made in his own image. Crouch yourselves;
'Tis your vocation, which you should not call
On free-born men to share with you, who stand
Erect except in presence of their God
Alone."

The second example is the stern stateliness of unshaken heroism with which he confronts insult and threats of torture and death, when, chained and baited by the soldiers, Sarnem bids him down on his knees and beg for mercy. They try to force him to the ground, inciting one another with cowardly ferocity to strike him, put out his eyes, or lop off a limb. His bearing and the soul it revealed were such as corresponded with the descriptive comment wrung from the onlooking Gesler:

"Can I believe my eyes? He smiles. He grasps
His chains as he would make a weapon of them
To lay his smiter dead. What kind of man
Is this, that looks in thraldom more at large
Than they who lay it on him!
A heart accessible as his to trembling
The rock or marble hath. They more do fear
To inflict than he to suffer. Each one calls
Upon the other to accomplish that
Himself hath not the manhood to begin.
He has brought them to a pause, and there they stand
Like things entranced by some magician's spell,
Wondering that they are masters of their organs
And not their faculties."

The third example is fearless defiance of tyrannical power, when, bound and helpless, he confronts the cowering Gesler with

majestic superiority. The Austrian governor says, "Ha, beware! think on thy chains!" Tell replies, with swelling bosom and flashing eyes,—

> "Though they were doubled, and did weigh me down
> Prostrate to earth, methinks I could rise up
> Erect, with nothing but the honest pride
> Of telling thee, usurper, to the teeth,
> Thou art a monster! Think upon my chains!
> Show me the link of them which, could it speak,
> Would give its evidence against my word.
> Think on my chains! 'They are my vouchers, which
> I show to heaven, as my acquittance from
> The impious swerving of abetting thee
> In mockery of its Lord!' Think on my chains!
> How came they on me?"

The fourth example is that of a grand, positive exultation in the moral beauty and glory of human nature in its undesecrated experiences. In response to the contemptible threat of the despot that his vengeance can kill, and that that is enough, Tell raises his face proudly, stretches out his arm, and says, in rich, strong accents,—

> "No: not enough:
> It cannot take away the grace of life,—
> Its comeliness of look that virtue gives,—
> Its port erect with consciousness of truth,—
> Its rich attire of honorable deeds,—
> Its fair report that's rife on good men's tongues:
> It cannot lay its hands on these, no more
> Than it can pluck his brightness from the sun,
> Or with polluted finger tarnish it."

The capacities of parental and filial affection in tragic pathos are wrought up by Knowles in the last two acts with consummate and unrelenting skill. The varied interest and suspense of the dialogue and action between Tell and Albert are harrowing, as, neither knowing that the other is in the power of Gesler, they are suddenly brought together. Instinct teaches them to appear as strangers. The struggle to suppress their feelings and play their part under the imminent danger is followed with painful excitement as the plot thickens and the dread catastrophe seems hurrying. Tell, ordered to instant execution, seeks to speak a few last words to his son, under the pretext of sending a farewell message to his Albert by the stranger boy. In a voice

whose condensed and tremulous murmuring betrays all the crucified tenderness it refuses to express, he says,—

"Thou dost not know me, boy; and well for thee
Thou dost not. I'm the father of a son
About thy age; I dare not tell thee where
To find him, lest he should be found of those
'Twere not so safe for him to meet with. Thou,
I see, wast born, like him, upon the hills:
If thou shouldst 'scape thy present thraldom, he
May chance to cross thee; if he should, I pray thee,
Relate to him what has been passing here,
And say I laid my hand upon thy head,
And said to thee--if he were here, as thou art,
Thus would I bless him: Mayst thou live, my boy,
To see thy country free, or die for her
As I do!"

Here he turns away with a slight convulsive movement mightily held down, and Sarnem exclaims, "Mark, he weeps!" The whole audience weep with him, too; as well they may, for the concentration of affecting circumstances in the scene forms one of the masterpieces of dramatic art. And Forrest played it in every minute particular with an intensity of nature and a closeness of truth effective to all, but agonizing to the sympathetic. His last special stroke of art was the natural yet cunningly-prepared contrast between the extreme nervous anxiety and agitation that marked his demeanor through all the preliminary stages of the fearful trial-shot for life and liberty, and his final calmness. Until the apple was on the head of his kneeling boy, and he had taken his position, he was all perturbation and misgiving. Then this spirit seemed to pass out of him with an irresolute shudder, and instantly he confirmed himself into an amazing steadiness. Every limb braced as marble, and as motionless, he stood, like a sculptured archer that looked life yet neither breathed nor stirred. The arrow flies, the boy bounds forward unhurt, with the transfixed apple in his hand. Tell then slays Gesler, and, dilating above the prostrated Austrian banner, amidst universal exultation both on and off the stage, closes the play with the shouted words,—

"To arms! and let no sword be sheathed
Until our land, from cliff to lake, is free!
Free as our torrents are that leap our rocks,
Or as our peaks that wear their caps of snow
In very presence of the regal sun!"

DAMON.

The Damon of Forrest perhaps surpassed, in popular effect, all his other early performances. The romantic story of the devotion of the ancient Greek pair of friends, as narrated by Valerius Maximus, has had a diffusion in literature and produced an impression on the imaginations of men almost without a parallel. This is because it appeals so penetratingly to a sentiment so deep and universal. Above the mere materialized instincts of life there is hardly a feeling of the human heart so profound and vivid as the craving for a genuine, tender, and inviolable friendship. After all the disappointments of experience, after all the hardening results of custom, strife, and fraud, this desire still remains alive, however thrust back and hidden. Remove the disguises and pretences, even of the aged and worldly-minded, and it is surprising in the souls of how many of them the spring of this baffled yet importunate desire will be found running and murmuring in careful concealment. In the hurry and worry of our practical age, so crowded with toil, rivalry, and distraction, the sentiment is less gratified in real life than ever, a fact which in many cases only makes the ideal still more attractive. Accordingly, when the sacred old tale of the Pythagorean friends was wrought into a play by Banim and Shiel, it struck the taste of the public at once. The play, too, had exceptional rhetorical merit, and was constructed with a simple plot, marked by a constant movement full of moral force and pathos.

Forrest had seen the rôle of Damon filled by Cooper with transcendent dignity and energy, and the remembrance had been burned into his brain. It was one of the most finished and famous impersonations of that celebrated actor, who charged it with honest passion and clothed it with rugged grandeur. The representation by Cooper, though unequal and careless, was so just in its general outlines to the idea of the author, that when Forrest first hesitatingly essayed the character, he had as a disciple of truth, perforce, largely to repeat the example. But he came to the part with a fresher youth, a more concentrated nature, a keener ambition, and a more elaborate study; and, original in many details as well as in the more conscientious working up of the harmony of the different scenes, it was soon conceded that

in the portrayal as a whole and in the unprecedented excitement it produced he had eclipsed his distinguished English forerunner on the American stage. He entered into the spirit and scenery of the subject with so intelligent and vehement an earnestness that he seemed not to act, but to be, Damon, speaking the words spontaneously created in his soul on the spot, not uttering any memorized lesson. It was like a resurrection of Syracuse, with the despot and his tools plotting the overthrow of its republican government, and the faithful friends seeking to prevent the success of the scheme. The spectators forgot that the Sicilian city had vanished ages since, and Dionysius and Pythias and Procles and Calanthe all gone to dust. The reality was before them, and its living shapes moved and spoke to the spell-bound sense.

The Damon of Forrest was in every respect grandly conceived and grandly embodied. His noble form carried proudly aloft in weighty ease, clad in Grecian garb, with long robe and sandals, corresponded with the justice and dignity of his soul. He was in no sense a sentimentalist or fanatic, but a man with intellect and heart balanced in conscience,—equally a patriot, a philosopher, and a friend,—his sentiments set in the great virtues of human nature loyal to the gods, his convictions and love not mere instincts but embedded in his reason and his honor. Yet, trained as he had been in the lofty ethics of Pythagoras, the austere discipline deadened not, but only curbed, the tremendous elemental passions of his being. Beneath his cultivated stateliness and playfulness the impetuous volume and energy of his natural feelings made them, reposing, grand as mountains clad with verdure, aroused, terrible as volcanoes spouting fire. An inferior actor would be tempted to weaken or slur everything else in order to give the higher relief to the great central topic of friendship. It was the rare excellence of Forrest that he gave as patient an attention and as sustained a treatment to the gravity and zealous devotion of the senator, the thoughtful habit of the scholar, the fondness of the husband and father, as he did to the touching affection of the friend, in his portraiture of Damon.

He makes his appearance in the street, on his way to the Senate, when he encounters a crowd of venal officers and soldiers thronging to the citadel, brandishing their swords and cheering

for the despot. He says, with a musing air first, then quickly passing through indignant scorn to mournful expostulation,—

"Then Dionysius has o'erswayed it? Well,
It is what I expected: there is now
No public virtue left in Syracuse.
What should be hoped from a degenerate,
Corrupted, and voluptuous populace,
When highly-born and meanly-minded nobles
Would barter freedom for a great man's feast,
And sell their country for a smile? The stream
With a more sure eternal tendency
Seeks not the ocean, than a sensual race
Their own devouring slavery. I am sick
At my inmost heart of everything I see
And hear! O Syracuse, I am at last
Forced to despair of thee! And yet thou art
My land of birth,—thou art my country still;
And, like an unkind mother, thou hast left
The claims of holiest nature in my heart,
And I must sorrow for, not hate thee!"

The soldiery shout,—

"For Dionysius! Ho, for Dionysius!
Damon. Silence, obstreperous traitors!
Your throats offend the quiet of the city;
And thou, who standest foremost of these knaves,
Stand back and answer me, a Senator,
What have you done?"

And then he slowly leans towards them with dilating front, and sways the whole crowd away from him as if by the invisible momentum of some surcharging magnetism.

"*Procles.* But that I know 'twill gall thee,
Thou poor and talking pedant of the school
Of dull Pythagoras, I'd let thee make
Conjecture from thy senses: But, in hope
'Twill stir your solemn anger, learn from me,
We have ta'en possession of the citadel.
Damon. Patience, ye good gods! a moment's patience,
That these too ready hands may not enforce
The desperate precept of my rising heart,—
Thou most contemptible and meanest tool
That ever tyrant used!"

Procles in a rage calls on his soldiers to advance and hew their upbraider in pieces. At this moment Pythias enters, sees how affairs stand, and, hastening to the side of his friend, calls out,—

> "Back! back! I say. He hath his armor on,—
> I am his sword, shield, helm; I but enclose
> Myself, and my own heart, and heart's blood, when
> I stand before him thus.
> *Damon.* False-hearted cravens!
> We are but two,—my Pythias, my halved heart!—
> My Pythias, and myself! but dare come on,
> Ye hirelings of a tyrant! dare advance
> A foot, or raise an arm, or bend a brow,
> And ye shall learn what two such arms can do
> Amongst a thousand of you."

A brief altercation follows, and the mob are appeased and depart, leaving the two friends alone together. They proceed to unbosom themselves, fondly communing with each other, alike concerning the interests of the State and their private relations, especially the approaching marriage of Pythias with the beautiful Calanthe. The unstudied ease and loving confidence of the dialogue, in voice and manner, plainly revealing the history of love that joined their souls, their cherished luxury of interior trust and surrender to each other, formed an artistic and most pleasing contrast to the hot and rough passages which had preceded. And when the fair Calanthe herself breaks in upon them, and Damon, unbending still more from his senatorial absorption and philosophic solemnity, changes his affectionate familiarity with Pythias into a sporting playfulness with her, the colloquial lightness and tender banter were a delightful bit of skill and nature, carrying the previous contrast to a still higher pitch. It was a lifting and lighting of the scene as gracious and sweet as sunshine smiling on flowers where the tempest had been frowning on rocks.

Learning that the recreant servants of the State are about to confer the dictatorship of Syracuse on Dionysius, Damon speeds to the capitol, to resist, and, if possible, defeat, the purpose. Undaunted by the studious insolence of his reception, almost single-handed he maintains a long combat with the conspirators, battling their design step by step. It was a most exciting scene on all accounts, and was steadily marked by delicate gradations to a climax of overwhelming power. He wielded by turns all the

weapons of argument, invective, persuasion, command, and defiance, exhibiting magnificent specimens of impassioned declamation, towering among the meaner men around him, an illuminated mould of heroic manhood whereon every god did seem to have set his seal.

Finally, they pass the fatal vote, and cry,—

"All hail, then, Dionysius the king.
Damon. Oh, all ye gods, my country! my country!
Dionysius. And that we may have leisure to put on
With fitting dignity our garb of power,
We do now, first assuming our own right,
Command from this, that was the senate-house,
Those rash, tumultuous men, who still would tempt
The city's peace with wild vociferation
And vain contentious rivalry. Away!
Damon. I stand,
A senator, within the senate-house!
Dion. Traitor! and dost thou dare me to my face?
Damon. Traitor! to whom? to thee?—O Syracuse,
Is this thy registered doom? To have no meaning
For the proud names of liberty and virtue,
But as some regal braggart sets it down
In his vocabulary? And the sense,
The broad, bright sense that Nature hath assigned them
In her infallible volume, interdicted
Forever from thy knowledge; or if seen,
And known, and put in use, denounced as treasonable,
And treated thus?—No, Dionysius, no!
I am no traitor! But, in mine allegiance
To my lost country, I proclaim thee one!
Dion. My guards, there! Ho!
Damon. What! hast thou, then, invoked
Thy satellites already?
Dion. Seize him!
Damon. Death's the best gift to one that never yet
Wished to survive his country. Here are men
Fit for the life a tyrant can bestow!
Let such as these live on."

Forrest was so absolutely possessed by the sentiment of these passages, that if, instead of standing in the Senate of Syracuse and representing her little forlorn-hope of patriots, he had been standing in the capitol of the whole republican world as a representative of collective humanity, his delivery could not have been more proudly befitting and competent. Such was the immense

contagious flood of inspiration with which he was loaded, that repeatedly his audiences rose to their feet as one man and cheered him till the dust rose to the roof and the very walls seemed to quiver.

Damon is cast into prison and doomed to die. The curtain rises on him seated at a table, writing a last testament to be given to Pythias. The solitude, the stillness, the heavy hour, the retrospect of his life, the separation from all he loves, the nearness of death, combine to make his meditations profound and sad. The picture of man and fate which he then drew—so calm and grave and chaste, so relieved against the other scenes—was an exquisite masterpiece. He lays down his stylus. In an attitude of deep reflection—the left leg easily extended and the hand pendent by its side, the right leg drawn up even with the chair, his right elbow resting on the table, the hand supporting his slightly-bowed head, the opened eyes level and fixed, with a voice of manly and mournful music, every tone and accent faultless in its mellow and pellucid solemnity—he pronounces this soliloquy:

"Existence! what is that? a name for nothing!
It is a cloudy sky chased by the winds,—
Its fickle form no sooner chosen than changed!
It is the whirling of the mountain-flood,
Which, as we look upon it, keeps its shape,
Though what composed that shape, and what composes,
Hath passed—will pass—nay, and is passing on
Even while we think to hold it in our eyes,
And deem it there. Fie! fie! a feverish vision,
A crude and crowded dream, unwilled, unbidden,
By the weak wretch that dreams it."

The effect was comparable to that of suddenly changing the scene from the clamorous multitude, bustle, and struggle of a noonday square to the midnight sky, with its eternal stars and moon shining on a lonely lake, whose serenity not a ripple or a rustling leaf disturbs.

Pythias visits him in his dungeon. The interview is conducted in a manner so unaffected, so true to the finest feelings of the human heart, that few and hard indeed were the beholders who could remain unmoved. On the lamentation of Damon that he is denied the satisfaction of pressing his wife and child to his

bosom before he dies, Pythias proposes to gain that privilege for him by being his hostage, if the tyrant will consent. He makes the request.

> "*Dionysius.* What wonder is this?
> Is he thy brother?
> *Damon.* Not in the fashion that the world puts on,
> But brother in the heart.
> *Dion.* Oh, by the wide world, Damocles,
> I did not think the heart of man was moulded
> To such a purpose."

Six hours are granted Damon in which to reach his villa on the mountain-side, four leagues distant, take his farewell, and return, assured that if he is not at the place of execution at the moment appointed the axe falls on his substitute.

The meeting with his Hermion and their boy in the garden of his villa, his resolute adaptation of his manner to the untimely innocent prattle of the child, the various transitions of tone and topic, the pathos of the intermittent upbreaking of his concealed struggle, the gradual unveiling of the awful announcement of his impending destiny, the determined efforts at firmness in himself and consolation for her, the clinging and agonized farewell,—all these were managed with a truthfulness and a distinct setting to be attained by no player without the utmost patience of study added to the deepest sincerity of nature.

He has lingered to the latest allowable moment. Hurrying out, he calls to his freedman, Lucullus, "Where is my horse?" and receives the following reply:

> "When I beheld the means of saving you,
> I could not hold my hand,—my heart was in it,
> And in my heart the hope of giving life
> And liberty to Damon—and—
> *Damon.* Go on!
> I am listening to thee.
> *Lucullus.* And in hope to save you
> I slew your steed.
> *Damon.* Almighty heavens!"

An ordinary actor would have said "Almighty heavens," at once; but Forrest, seeming taken utterly by surprise, did not speak the words till he had for some time prepared the way for them by a display of bewildered astonishment, which revealed the

workings of his brain so clearly that the spectators could scarcely believe that the actor was acquainted with the plot in advance. The facts of the situation seemed presenting themselves to his inner gaze in so many pictures,—the calamity, his broken promise, the disappointment and death of his friend, the dread dishonor,—and their expressions—wonder, rage, horror, despair, frenzy—visibly came out first in slow succession, then in chaotic mixture. At last the gathered tornado explodes in one burst of headlong wrath. Every rigid muscle swollen, his convulsed face livid, his dilated eyes emitting sparks, with the crouch and spring of an infuriated tiger he plunges on the hapless Lucullus and hoists him sheer in air. Vain are the cries of the unfortunate wretch, idle his struggles. Articulating with a terrible scream the words,—

> "To the eternal river of the dead!
> The way is shorter than to Syracuse,—
> 'Tis only far as yonder yawning gulf,—
> I'll throw thee with one swing to Tartarus,
> And follow after thee!"—

his enraged master disappears with him in his grasp. The feelings of the audience, wound to an intolerable pitch, audibly give way in a long, loosened breath, as they sink into their seats with a huge rustle all over the house.

Meanwhile, the fatal crisis nears, and Damon, delayed by the loss of his steed, comes not. The stroke of time on the dial-plate against the temple dedicated to the Goddess of Fidelity moves unrelentingly forward. All is ready. The tyrant, his skepticism confirmed, is there, indignant at the soul that in its fling of proud philosophy had made him feel so outsoared and humbled. Pythias, agitated between a dreadful suspicion of his friend and the fear of some unforeseen obstacle, parts with Calanthe, and prepares for the beheading steel. A vast multitude on the hills stretch their long, blackening outline in the round of the blue heavens, and await the event.

> "Mute expectation spreads its anxious hush
> O'er the wide city, that as silent stands
> As its reflection in the quiet sea.
> Behold, upon the roof what thousands gaze
> Toward the distant road that leads to Syracuse.

An hour ago a noise was heard afar,
Like to the pulses of the restless surge;
But as the time approaches, all grows still
As the wide dead of midnight!
A horse and rider in the distance,
By the gods! They wave their hats, and he returns it!
It is—no—that were too unlike—but there!"

Damon rushes in, looks around, exclaims, exultingly,—

"Ha! he is alive! untouched!"

and falls, with a hysterical laugh, exhausted by the superhuman exertions he has made to arrive in time. He soon rallies, and, when his name is pronounced, leaps upon the scaffold beside his friend; and all the god comes into him as, proudly erecting his form, he answers,—

"I am here upon the scaffold! look at me:
I am standing on my throne; as proud a one
As yon illumined mountain where the sun
Makes his last stand; let him look on me too;
He never did behold a spectacle
More full of natural glory. Death is— Ha!
All Syracuse starts up upon her hills,
And lifts her hundred thousand hands. She shouts,
Hark, how she shouts! O Dionysius!
When wert thou in thy life hailed with a peal
Of hearts and hands like that one? Shout again!
Again! until the mountains echo you,
And the great sea joins in that mighty voice,
And old Enceladus, the Son of Earth,
Stirs in his mighty caverns. Tell me, slaves,
Where is your tyrant? Let me see him now;
Why stands he hence aloof? Where is your master?
What is become of Dionysius?
I would behold and laugh at him!
Dionysius. Behold me!
Go, Damocles, and bid a herald cry
Wide through the city, from the eastern gate
Unto the most remote extremity,
That Dionysius, tyrant as he is,
Gives back to Damon life and freedom."

Like one struggling out of a fearful dream, the phantom mists receding, horror expiring and brightening into joy, the great actor lifts himself, relaxes, staggers into the arms of his Pythias, and the curtain sinks. The people, slowly scattering to their homes, do not easily or soon forget the mighty agitation they have undergone.

BRUTUS.

The two celebrated characters of early Roman history, Brutus and Virginius, each the hero of a startling social revolution, as well as of an appalling domestic tragedy, in which personal affection is nobly sacrificed to public principle,—these imposing forms, each enveloped in his grand and solemn legend, stalking vivid and colossal in the shadows of antique time,—these sublime democratic idols of old Rome, men of tempestuous passion and iron solidity, whose civic heroism was mated with private tenderness and crowned with judicial severity,—like statues of rock clustered with ivy and their heads wreathed in retributive lightnings,—both these personages in all their accompaniments were singularly well fitted for the ethical, passionate, single-minded, and ponderous individuality of Forrest to impersonate with the highest sincerity and power. He achieved extraordinary success in them. There was in himself so much of the old Roman pride, independence, concentrated and tenacious feeling, majestic and imperious weight, that it was not hard for him to steal the keys of history, enter the chambers of the past, and reanimate the heroic and revengeful masks. He did so, to the astonishment and delight of those who beheld the spectacle.

The play of "Brutus, or the Fall of Tarquin," the best of the dramatic productions of John Howard Payne, has been greatly admired. Its title rôle was a favorite one with Kean, Cooper, Macready, Booth, and Forrest; and they all won laurels in it. The interest of the plot begins at once, and scarcely flags to the end. The murderous tyrant, Tarquin, has forced his way to the throne through treason, poison, and gore, and holds remorseless rule, to the deep though muffled indignation and horror of the better citizens. His fears of the discontented patriots have led him to murder their master-spirit, Marcus Junius, and his eldest son. The younger son, Lucius, escaped, and affected to have lost his reason, playing the part of a fool, and meanwhile abiding his time to avenge his family and his country. He kept his disguise so shrewdly that he was allowed to be much at court, a harmless butt for the mirth of the tyrant and his fellows.

Forrest kept up the semblance of imbecility, the shambling gait, the dull eyes and vacant face, the sloppy, irresolute gestures, the apparent forgetfulness, with the closest truth. He had for

years studied the traits and phases of these poor beings in visits to lunatic-asylums. But in the depicting of the fool there was some obvious unfitness of his heavy bearing, noble voice, and native majesty to the shallow and broken qualities of such a character. It did not appear quite spontaneous or natural. He clearly had to act it by will and effort. Yet there was a sort of propriety even in this, as the part was professedly an assumed and pretended one. But when he cast off the vile cloud of idiocy and broke forth in his own patrician person, the effect of the foregone foil was manifest, and the new and perfect picture stood in luminous relief. When Claudius and Aruns had been badgering him, and had received some such pointed repartees as a fool will seem now and then to hit on by chance, as they went out he followed them with a look of superb contempt, and said, in an intonation of intense scorn wonderfully effective,—

> "Yet, 'tis not that which ruffles me,—the gibes
> And scornful mockeries of ill-governed youth,—
> Or flouts of dastard sycophants and jesters,—
> Reptiles, who lay their bellies on the dust
> Before the frown of majesty!"

And the house was always electrified by the sudden transformation with which then, passing from the words,

> "All this
> I but expect, nor grudge to bear; the face
> I carry, courts it!"

he towered into prouder dimensions, and, as one inspired, delivered himself in an outbreak of declamatory grandeur:

> "Son of Marcus Junius!
> When will the tedious gods permit thy soul
> To walk abroad in her own majesty,
> And throw this visor of thy madness from thee,
> To avenge my father's and my brother's murder?
> Had this been all, a thousand opportunities
> I've had to strike the blow—and my own life
> I had not valued at a rush.—But still—
> There's something nobler to be done!—My soul,
> Enjoy the strong conception! Oh! 'tis glorious
> To free a groaning country,—
> To see Revenge
> Spring like a lion from the den, and tear
> These hunters of mankind! Grant but the time,

Grant but the moment, gods! If I am wanting,
May I drag out this idiot-feignéd life
To late old age, and may posterity
Ne'er hear of Junius but as Tarquin's fool!"

The manner in which, in his fictitious rôle, in his interview with Tullia, the parricidal queen, whose prophetic soul is ominously alive to every alarming hint, he veered along the perilous edges of his feigned and his real character, the sinister alternation of jest and portent, was a passage of exciting interest, sweeping the chords of the breast from sport to awe with facile and forceful hand. The same effect was produced in a still higher degree in the interview with his son Titus, whose patriotism and temper he tested by lifting a little his false garb of folly and letting some tentative gleams of his true nature and purposes appear.

"*Brutus.* I'll tell a secret to thee
Worth a whole city's ransom. This it is:
Nay, ponder it and lock it in thy heart:—
There are more fools, my son, in this wise world,
Than the gods ever made.
Titus. Sayest thou? Expound this riddle.
Would the kind gods restore thee to thy reason—
Brutus. Then, Titus, then I should be mad with reason.
Had I the sense to know myself a Roman,
This hand should tear this heart from out my ribs,
Ere it should own allegiance to a tyrant.
If, therefore, thou dost love me, pray the gods
To keep me what I am. Where all are slaves,
None but the fool is happy.
Titus. We are Romans—
Not slaves—
Brutus. Not slaves? Why, what art thou?
Titus. Thy son.
Dost thou not know me?
Brutus. You abuse my folly.
I know thee not.—Wert thou my son, ye gods,
Thou wouldst tear off this sycophantic robe,
Tuck up thy tunic, trim these curléd locks
To the short warrior-cut, vault on thy steed,
Then, scouring through the city, call to arms,
And shout for liberty!
Titus. [*Starts.*] Defend me, gods!
Brutus. Ha! does it stagger thee?"

The simulation had been dropped so gradually, the unconsciously waxing earnestness of purpose and self-betrayal were

carried up over such invisible and exquisite steps, that, when the electric climax was touched, he who confronted Brutus on the stage did not affect to be more startled than those who gazed on him from before it really were.

Finding his son is in love with the sister of Sextus, and in no ripe mood for dangerous enterprise, he turns sorrowfully from him, murmuring,—

> "Said I for liberty? I said it not.
> My brain is weak, and wanders. You abuse it."

When left alone, he soliloquizes, beginning with sorrow, and passing in the succeeding parts from sadness to repulsion, then to anxiety, afterwards to hope, and ending with an air of proud joy.

> "I was too sudden. I should have delayed
> And watched a surer moment for my purpose.
> He must be frighted from his dream of love.
> What! shall the son of Junius wed a Tarquin?
> As yet I've been no father to my son,—
> I could be none; but, through the cloud that wraps me,
> I've watched his mind with all a parent's fondness,
> And hailed with joy the Junian glory there.
> Could I once burst the chains which now enthrall him,
> My son would prove the pillar of his country,—
> Dear to her freedom as he is to me."

Few things in the history of the stage have been superior in its way to what Forrest made the opening of the third act in Brutus. It is deep night in Rome, thunder and lightning, the Capitol in the background, in front an equestrian statue of Tarquinius Superbus. Brutus enters, revolving in his breast the now nearly complete scheme for overthrowing the despot. Appearance, thoughts, words, voice, manner, all in strict keeping with the time and place, he speaks:

> "Slumber forsakes me, and I court the horrors
> Which night and tempest swell on every side.
> Launch forth thy thunders, Capitolian Jove!
> Put fire into the languid souls of men;
> Let loose thy ministers of wrath amongst them,
> And crush the vile oppressor! Strike him down,
> Ye lightnings! Lay his trophies in the dust!
> [*Storm increases.*
> Ha! this is well! flash, ye blue-forkéd fires!
> Loud-bursting thunders, roar! and tremble, earth!
> [*A violent crash of thunder, and the statue of Tarquin, struck by a flash, is shattered to pieces.*

What! fallen at last, proud idol! struck to earth!
I thank you, gods! I thank you! When you point
Your shafts at human pride, it is not chance,
'Tis wisdom levels the commissioned blow.
But I,—a thing of no account—a slave,—
I to your forkéd lightnings bare my bosom
In vain,—for what's a slave—a dastard slave?
A fool, a Brutus? [*Storm increases.*] Hark! the storm rides on!
Strange hopes possess my soul. My thoughts grow wild.
I'll sit awhile and ruminate."

Seating himself on a fragment of the fallen statue, in contemplative attitude, his great solitary presence, blending with the entire scene, presented a tableau of the most sombre and romantic beauty.

Valerius enters. Brutus cautiously probes his soul, and is rejoiced to find him worthy of confidence. As they commune on the degradation of their country, the crimes of the royal family, and the hopes of speedy redemption, we seem to feel the sultry smother and to hear the muffled rumble of the rising storm of an outraged people. As Valerius departs, Tarquin himself advances, and gives a new momentum to the movement for his own destruction. Still supposing Brutus to be an imbecile, with shameless garrulity he boasts of the fiendish violence he has done to Lucretia, the wife of Collatinus, and the near kinswoman of Brutus himself. This woman was of such transcendent loveliness and nobility of person and soul as to have become a poetic ideal of her sex throughout the civilized world in all the ages since. While Tarquin boastfully described his deed, the effect on his auditor was terrific to see. The inward struggle was fully pictured without, in the hands convulsively clutched, the eyes starting from their sockets, the blood threatening to burst through the swollen veins of the neck and temples. Finally, the quivering earthquake of passion broke in an explosion of maniacal abandonment.

"The fiends curse you, then! Lash you with snakes!
When forth you walk, may the red flaming sun
Strike you with livid plagues!
Vipers, that die not, slowly gnaw your heart!
May earth be to you but one wilderness!
May you hate yourself,—
For death pray hourly, yet be in tortures,
Millions of years expiring!"

He shrieked this fearful curse upon the shrinking criminal with a frenzied energy which so amazed and stirred the audience that sometimes they gave vent to their excitement in a simultaneous shout of applause, sometimes by looking at one another in silence or whispering, "Wonderful!"

Lucretia, unwilling to survive the purity of her name, has stabbed herself. Collatinus rushes wildly in with the bloody steel in his hand, and tells the tale of horror:

> "She's dead! Lucretia's dead! This is her blood!
> Howl, howl, ye men of Rome.
> Ye mighty gods, where are your thunders now?"

Brutus, the full gale of oratoric fire and splendor swelling his frame and lighting his features, seizes the dagger, lifts it aloft, and exclaims:

> "Heroic matron!
> Now, now, the hour is come! By this one blow
> Her name's immortal, and her country saved!
> Hail, dawn of glory! Hail, thou sacred weapon!
> Virtue's deliverer, hail! This fatal steel,
> Empurpled with the purest blood on earth,
> Shall cut your chains of slavery asunder.
> Hear, Romans, hear! did not the Sibyl tell you
> A fool should set Rome free? I am that fool:
> Brutus bids Rome be free!
> *Valerius.* What can this mean?
> *Brutus.* It means that Lucius Junius has thrown off
> The mask of madness, and his soul rides forth
> On the destroying whirlwind, to avenge
> The wrongs of that bright excellence and Rome.
> [*Sinks on his knees.*]
> Hear me, great Jove! and thou, paternal Mars,
> And spotless Vesta! To the death, I swear,
> My burning vengeance shall pursue these Tarquins!
> Ne'er shall my limbs know rest till they are swept
> From off the earth which groans beneath their infamy!
> Valerius, Collatine, Lucretius, all,
> Be partners in my oath."

The above apostrophe to the dagger was marvellously delivered. As he held it up with utmost stretch of arm and addressed it, it seemed to become a living thing, an avenging divinity.

The next scene was given with a contrast that came like enchantment. A multitude of relatives and friends are celebrating

the obsequies of Lucretia. Brutus, with solemn and gentle mien, and a delivery of funereal gloom in which admiring love and pride gild the sorrow, pronounces her eulogy. He paints her with a bright and sweet fondness, and bewails her fate with a closing cadence indescribably plaintive.

"Such perfections
Might have called back the torpid breast of age
To long-forgotten rapture: such a mind
Might have abashed the boldest libertine,
And turned desire to reverential love
And holiest affection. Oh, my countrymen!
You all can witness when that she went forth
It was a holiday in Rome; old age
Forgot its crutch, labor its task,—all ran;
And mothers, turning to their daughters, cried,
'There, there's Lucretia!' Now, look ye, where she lies,
That beauteous flower by ruthless violence torn!
Gone! gone! gone!
All. Sextus shall die! But what for the king, his father?
Brutus. Seek you instruction? Ask yon conscious walls,
Which saw his poisoned brother, saw the incest
Committed there, and they will cry, Revenge!
Ask yon deserted street, where Tullia drove
O'er her dead father's corse, 'twill cry, Revenge!
Ask yonder senate-house, whose stones are purple
With human blood, and it will cry, Revenge!
Go to the tomb where lies his murdered wife,
And the poor queen, who loved him as her son,
Their unappeaséd ghosts will shriek, Revenge!
The temples of the gods, the all-viewing heavens,
The gods themselves, shall justify the cry,
And swell the general sound, Revenge! Revenge!"

The instant change, in that presence of death, from the subdued, mournful manner to this tremendous burst of blazing eloquence was a consummate marvel of oratoric effect, in which art and nature were at odds which was the greater element. It might be said of Forrest in this scene,—as Corunna in the play itself described to Horatius the action of Brutus,—

"He waved aloft the bloody dagger,
And spoke as if he held the souls of men
In his own hand and moulded them at pleasure.
They looked on him as they would view a god,
Who, from a darkness which invested him,

Sprang forth, and, knitting his stern brow in frowns,
Proclaimed the vengeful will of angry Jove."

The throng are so possessed with him that they propose to make him king in place of Tarquin; but the patriot, his unselfish soul breathing from his countenance and audible in his accent, convinces them of his personal purity:

"No, fellow-citizens!
If mad ambition in this guilty frame
Had strung one kingly fibre,—yea, but one,—
By all the gods, this dagger which I hold
Should rip it out, though it entwined my heart.
Now take the body up. Bear it before us
To Tarquin's palace; there we'll light our torches,
And, in the blazing conflagration, rear
A pile for these chaste relics, that shall send
Her soul amongst the stars. On!"

They sweep away to their victims, deliver the State, and seal an ample vengeance.

The primary climax of the play has thus been reached. Brutus has emerged from his idiot concealment and vindicated himself as the successful champion of liberty and his country. He is next to appear in a second climax, of still greater intensity and height, by the personal sacrifice of himself as the martyr of duty. The first action has the superior national significance, but the second action has the superior human significance, and therefore properly succeeds. Titus, the only son of the liberator, corrupted by his love of power and pleasure, has, in a measure, joined the party of the Tarquins. He is therefore regarded by the victor-patriots as a traitor to Rome. Brutus, torn between his parental affection and his public duty, is profoundly agitated, yet resolute. He spares the life of Tarquinia, the betrothed of Titus, at the same time warning him,—

"This I concede; but more if thou attemptest,—
By all the gods!—Nay, if thou dost not take
Her image, though with smiling Cupids decked,
And pluck it from thy heart, there to receive
Rome and her glories in without a rival,
Thou art no son of mine, thou art no Roman!"

For the defective treatment of the theme of the love of Brutus for his son by the author the actor made the very best amends in

his power by improving every opportunity to suggest the depth and fervor of the tie, in look and gesture and tone, in order to exalt the coming catastrophe. Seated calmly in the curule chair as Consul, robed with purple, the lictors with their uplifted axes before him, a messenger announces the seizure of a young man at the head of an insurgent band. Valerius whispers to Brutus,—

> "Oh, my friend, horror invades my heart.
> I know thy soul, and pray the gods to put
> Thee to no trial beyond a mortal bearing."

Mastering his agitation by a mighty effort, Brutus responds,—

> "No, they will not,—they cannot."

The unhappy Titus is brought in guarded. The father, all his convulsed soul visible in his countenance and motions, turns from him, rises, walks to his colleague, and says, with tremulous, sobbing voice,—

> "That youth, my Titus, was my age's hope,—
> I loved him more than language can express,—
> I thought him born to dignify the world."

The culprit kneels to him, and begs for clemency:

> "A word for pity's sake. Before thy feet,
> Humbled in soul, thy son and prisoner kneels.
> Love is my plea: a father is my judge;
> Nature my advocate!—I can no more:
> If these will not appease a parent's heart,
> Strike through them all, and lodge thy vengeance here!"

Almost overpowered, Brutus hesitates a moment, rallies, straightens himself up, and exclaims, with lofty dignity,—

> "Break off! I will not, cannot hear thee further!
> The affliction nature hath imposed on Brutus,
> Brutus will suffer as he may.—Enough!
> Lictors, secure your prisoner. Point your axes.
> To the Senate—On!"

The last scene shows the Senate in the temple of Mars, Brutus in the Consular seat. He speaks, beginning with solemn air and tones of ringing firmness:

"Romans, the blood which hath been shed this day
Hath been shed wisely. Traitors, who conspire
Against mature societies, may urge
Their acts as bold and daring; and though villains,
Yet they are manly villains. But to stab
The cradled innocent, as these have done,—
To strike their country in the mother-pangs
Of struggling childbirth, and direct the dagger
To freedom's infant throat,—is a deed so black
That my foiled tongue refuses it a name."

Here he pauses, falters a little, then slowly adds,—

"There is one criminal still left for judgment:
Let him approach."

Titus is led in by the lictors, with the edges of their axes turned towards him. He kneels.

"Oh, Brutus! Brutus! must I call you father,
Yet have no token of your tenderness?
Brutus. Think that I love thee by my present passion,
By these unmanly tears, these earthquakes here,
Let these convince you that no other cause
Could force a father thus to wrong his nature.
Romans, forgive this agony of grief,—
My heart is bursting,—Nature must have way.
I will perform all that a Roman should,—
I cannot feel less than a father ought!"

The piteous look and choking accents with which he said to his son, "Think that I love thee by my present passion," were irresistible. They seemed to betoken that his heart was breaking. The sound of weeping was usually audible in the audience, and hundreds might be seen wiping the tears from their cheeks.

Justice holds its course, and the Consul sentences the guilty citizen to the block:

"*Brutus.* The sovereign magistrate of injured Rome
Condemns
A crime, thy father's bleeding heart forgives.
Go,—meet thy death with a more manly courage
Than grief now suffers me to show in parting;
And, while she punishes, let Rome admire thee!
Farewell!
Titus. Farewell forever!
Brutus. Forever! Lictors, lead your prisoner forth.

My hand shall wave the signal for the axe;
Then let the trumpet's sound proclaim its fall.
Poor youth! Thy pilgrimage is at an end!
A few sad steps have brought thee to the brink
Of that tremendous precipice, whose depth
No thought of man can fathom. Justice now
Demands her victim! A little moment,
And I am childless.—One effort, and 'tis past!—
Justice is satisfied, and Rome is free!"

Forrest made the finale an artistic climax of superlative originality, finish, and power. He climbs the steps of the tribune to wave his hand, as agreed, in signal for the execution. His face grows pale. He struggles to lift his arm. Then, when the trumpet announces that the deed is done, he absently wraps his head up in his toga, as if it were something separate from his body which must not know what has taken place. Suddenly his whole form relaxes and sinks heavily on the stage.

VIRGINIUS.

The rôle of Virginius, as filled by Forrest, had, with many resemblances to that of Brutus, also many important differences. In the domestic pictures of the first part, the sacred innocence and artless ways of the motherless daughter and the overflowing fondness of the widowed father, an element of more varied and tender beauty is introduced. The play has a wider range of interest than that of Brutus, and, while more attractive in some portions, is quite as terrible in others. To the perfecting of his performance of it Forrest devoted as much study and labor as to any part he ever acted. It obtained a commensurate recognition and approval from the general public. In its outlines as a piece of physical realism his rendering of Virginius was as pronounced as that of his Brutus, and in its artistic finish as an example of imaginative portraiture it was unquestionably far superior. In addition to the exceptional power with which the central motives were presented, there were incidental features of extreme felicity. For instance, the vein of sarcasm which Virginius displays towards the Decemvirs and their party was worked with a master-hand, and the friendship for the crabbed but brave and good old Dentatus was exhibited with a careless and bluff cordiality direct from nature. As a complete picture of the antique passion and sublime

strength of the Roman character, the whole performance stood forth in pre-eminent distinctness and vitality.

Sometimes, as an artist is lifting the curtain to expose his picture to view, with the removal of the first corner of drapery the connoisseur catches a glimpse of an exquisite bit of drawing and color which convinces him that the entire work is a great and beautiful one. When Forrest made his entrance in Virginius, with an irritated and impetuous air, the earliest sound of his voice, so deep and resonant, coining and propelling its words in air with such easy and percussive precision, seized the attention of the auditory and gave assurance that something uncommon was to come. With a quick articulation and an expostulating tone he said, "Why did you make him Decemvir, and first Decemvir, too?" He refers to the shameless Appius Claudius, and the key-note of the play is struck by his inflection of the words.

He is not displeased on seeing reason for suspecting that his daughter—an only and idolized child left him by his dead wife—is in love with the noble young Lucius Icilius, for whom he has an excellent liking. He sends for Virginia, who is still a schoolgirl, that he may question her. She comes in, and sits upon his knee, saying, "Well, father, what is your will?" At the sight of her his face lights as if a sunbeam had suddenly fallen on it, and his voice has a sweet, low, half-smothered tone, as if the words were spoken in his heart, and only their softened echoes came forth:

> "*Virginius.* I wished to see you,
> To ask you of your tasks,—how they go on,—
> And what your masters say of you,—what last
> You did. I hope you never play
> The truant?
> *Virginia.* The truant! No, indeed, Virginius.
> *Virginius.* I am sure you do not. Kiss me!
> *Virginia.* Oh! my father,
> I am so happy when you are kind to me!
> *Virginius.* You are so happy when I'm kind to you!
> Am I not always kind? I never spoke
> An angry word to you in all my life,
> Virginia! You are happy when I'm kind!
> That's strange; and makes me think you have some reason
> To fear I may be otherwise than kind."

The parental tenderness of his manner, his speech, his kiss, seemed to combine the love of a father and a mother in one. His

hand meanwhile was playing with her tresses in a way suggestive of unpurposed instinctive fondness, exquisitely touching.

The transition was perfect when, meeting Icilius, after scrutinizing him earnestly, as though to read his very soul, the rough soldier and honest man succeeds to the adoring father:

> "Icilius!
> Thou seest this hand? It is a Roman's, boy;
> 'Tis sworn to liberty,—it is the friend,
> Of honor. Dost thou think so?
> *Icilius.* Do I think
> Virginius owns that hand?
> *Virginius.* Then you'll believe
> It has an oath deadly to tyranny,
> And is the foe of falsehood! By the gods,
> Knew it the lurking-place of treason, though
> It were a brother's heart, 'twould drag the caitiff
> Forth. Dar'st thou take this hand?"

And when, a little later, he led his daughter to her lover and formally betrothed them in these eloquent words, his whole frame betraying the struggle at composure, it was a consummate moral painting of humanity in one of its most sacred aspects:

> "Didst thou but know, young man,
> How fondly I have watched her, since the day
> Her mother died, and left me to a charge
> Of double duty bound,—how she hath been
> My pondered thought by day, my dream by night,
> My prayer, my vow, my offering, my praise,
> My sweet companion, pupil, tutor, child!—
> Thou wouldst not wonder that my drowning eye
> And choking utterance upbraid my tongue
> That tells thee she is thine!"

The plot progresses, and the air is thick with the clamor and strife of Rome, the hates of parties and the reverberation of war. Virginius is called to a distance with the army. His daughter is left under the guardianship of her uncle. One day the lustful Appius has a sight of her passing in the street.

> "Her young beauty,
> Trembling and blushing 'twixt the striving kisses
> Of parting spring and meeting summer,"

inflames him. He charges one of his minions to seize her, under

the pretext that she is the child of one of his slaves, sold to Virginius and falsely proclaimed his daughter. With details of cruel atrocity the deed is accomplished, in spite of the desperate interference of Icilius. Lucius is sent as a messenger to the camp to inform Virginius. Lucius tells him he is wanted immediately at Rome. With a start and a look of dread anxiety he demands to know wherefore. The messenger prevaricates and delays, but, on being chided and commanded to speak out, says, "Hear me, then, with patience." Virginius replies, while his restless fingers and the working of his toes, seen through the openings of his sandals, most effectually contradict the words, "Well, I am patient."

> "*Lucius.* Your Virginia—
> *Virginius.* Stop, my Lucius!
> I am cold in every member of my frame!
> If 'tis prophetic, Lucius, of thy news,
> Give me such token as her tomb would,—silence.
> I'll bear it better.
> *Lucius.* You are still—
> *Virginius.* I thank thee, Jupiter, I am still a father!"

The change of his countenance while uttering the word "father," from the expression it wore on the word "silence," was like an unexpected sunburst through a gloomy cloud. As Lucius went on in his narration, the breathing of the listener thickened with intensity of suspense, his heart beat with remittent throb, and he started at each point in the outrage like one receiving electric shocks.

He departed for Rome, where his poor daughter was guarded in the house of her uncle, Numitorius, in the deepest distress and terror. He entered; and such was his expression as he cried, "My child! my child!" and she rushed into his arms, that there were scarcely ever many dry eyes in the theatre at that moment. Then it was something divine to be seen, and never to be forgotten, to behold how he turned from his blistering and disdainful apostrophe to the villain who had dared set his panders after her, and, taking her precious head in his hands, gazed in her face, saying,—

> "I never saw you look so like your mother
> In all my life!
> *Virginia.* You'll be advised, dear father?

Virginius. It was her soul,—her soul, that played just then
About the features of her child, and lit them
Into the likeness of her own. When first
She placed thee in my arms,—I recollect it
As a thing of yesterday!—she wished, she said,
That it had been a man. I answered her,
It was the mother of a race of men,
And paid her for thee with a kiss. Her lips
Are cold now,—could they but be warmed again,
How they would clamor for thee!
Virginia. My dear father,
You do not answer me! Will you not be advised?
Virginius. I will not take him by the throat and strangle him!
But I COULD do it! I could DO IT!"

They go to the Forum, where Appius is seated on the tribunal, supported by the lictors and an armed troop. The acting of Forrest in the trial-scene that followed was as genuine and moving, set in as bold relief, as anything the American theatre has known. Who that saw him can ever forget the imperial front with which, bearing Virginia on his arm, he advanced before the judgment-seat,—the firm step, the indomitable face, the parental love that seemed to throw a thousand invisible tendrils around his child to hold her up! The tableau caused a silence that was absolute, and was maintained so long that the suspense had begun to be painful, when the kingly voice of Virginius broke the spell:

"Does no one speak? I am defendant here!
Is silence my opponent? Fit opponent
To plead a cause too foul for speech! What brow
Shameless, gives front to this most valiant cause,
That tries its prowess 'gainst the honor of
A girl, yet lacks the wit to know that they
Who cast off shame should likewise cast off fear!"

The strong, lucid, cutting tones in which these words were spoken went vibrating into the breasts of the listeners, and thrilled them with sympathetic echoes. The perjured witness was summoned by the recreant judge. And the next passage of the play had a moral meaning deep enough, and was represented with a truth and power grand enough, to turn the stage for the time being into a pulpit and make the world tremble at its preaching.

"*Virginius.* And are you the man
That claims my daughter for his slave?—Look at me,
And I will give her to thee.

Claudius. She is mine, then:
Do I not look at you?
Virginius. Your eye does, truly,
But not your soul.—I see it, through your eye,
Shifting and shrinking,—turning every way
To shun me. You surprise me, that your eye,
So long the bully of its master, knows not
To put a proper face upon a lie,
But gives the port of impudence to falsehood
When it would pass it off for truth. Your soul
Dares as soon show its face to me!"

Now the interest grows yet intenser and the influence of the actor yet more penetrating in its simplicity and terrible beauty. Virginius finds that nothing can save his daughter from the last profanation of the tyrant except her immediate immolation by himself. For a moment he is lost in a reverie, striving to think what he can do. By chance he perceives a knife lying on the stall of a butcher. At the sight of this providential instrument an electric change passes over his face, revealing all his purpose with a grim joy, like the lightning-flash at night illumining the murky sky and giving an instantaneous outline of the clouds loaded with the coming storm. He moves gradually towards the stall, smiling on Virginia a tender smile, full of the consolation he sees in the prospect of her deliverance even by death. He pats her lovingly on the shoulder while changing her from his left arm, that with it he may reach the knife. He stealthily seizes it and passes it behind him from the left hand to the right. With deep fondness he breathes, "My dear Virginia," and gives her quick and fervent kisses, which he appears striving to press into her very soul. Tears seem to moisten his words,—

"There is one only way to save thine honor,—
'Tis this!"

And, swift as motion of the human arm can make it, the knife pierces her heart. The storm has burst, the lightning has wreathed its folds around the consecrated instrument of the work, and now the thunder-tones of his voice crash through the theatre in the awful exclamation,—

"Lo, Appius! with this innocent blood
I do devote thee to the infernal gods!

Make way there!
If they dare
To tempt the desperate weapon that is maddened
With drinking my daughter's blood, why, let them.
Thus, thus it rushes in amongst them. Way, there!"

His exit here used to excite the wildest huzzas, the men in the pit standing with their hats in their uplifted hands, and the women in the boxes waving their handkerchiefs.

Virginius heads the revolution, in which the revolted troops and the commons join. The tyranny is hurled to the dust, the people freed, and Appius lodged in prison. But the wronged and wretched father is broken down by the preternatural horror and excitement he has undergone, and loses his reason. He is next seen in his own desolate home, with a pale and haggard face, and a look half wild, half dreamy, talking to himself:

"'Tis ease! 'tis ease! I am content! 'Tis peace,—
'Tis anything that is most soft and quiet.
And after such a dream! I want my daughter.
Send me my daughter! Will she come, or not?
I'll call myself. Virginia!"

His call of Virginia was a call dictated by a dethroned mind. It was a sound that appeared to come from a mysterious vault. There was a kind of semi-wakefulness in it, like the utterance of a thought in a dream. It had a touch of pity. It was an inverted form of sound, that turned back whence it issued and fell dead where it was born, feeling that there was no reply for it to keep it alive. Yet, after a pause, he fancies he hears her answering; and he rapidly asks,—

"Is it a voice, or nothing, answers me?
I hear a sound so fine there's nothing lives
'Twixt it and silence."

And then, with an entranced listening, he follows the illusory voice around to different parts of the room, in the vain attempt to find its source. An apathetic stare, a blank, miserable stupor, succeeds, soon broken by the fancy that he hears her shrieking in the prison for rescue from Appius,—and he darts away. Appius, meanwhile, is planning an escape, and gloatingly counting over in imagination the victims he will pick out to expiate for his

present shame, when the shattered Virginius, appalling even in his ruins, rushes in upon him, wildly crying, "Give me my daughter!" The affrighted prisoner replies,—

> "I know nothing of her, Virginius, nothing.
> *Virginius.* Do you tell me so?
> Vile tyrant! Think you, shall I not believe
> My own eyes before your tongue? Why, there she is!
> There at your back,—her locks dishevelled, and
> Her vestment torn,—her cheeks all faded with
> Her pouring tears.
> Villain! is this a sight to show a father?
> And have I not a weapon to requite thee?"

In his distraught fury, feeling over his body for some weapon he *discovers* his own hands. A wild and eager delight shudders through him as, holding these naked instruments before him, he springs on the terrified Appius and strangles him to death. Lucius, Icilius, and Numitorius enter, bearing the urn of Virginia. The wronged father and sufferer looks up, and sighs, with a bewildered gaze,—

> "What a load my heart has heaved off! Where is he?
> I thought I had done it."

They call him by name. He makes no response. Icilius places the urn in his right hand, with the single word, "Virginia." He looks at Icilius and the urn, at Numitorius and Lucius, seems struck by their mourning garb, looks again at the urn, breaks into a passion of tears, and falls on the neck of Icilius, exclaiming, "Virginia!"

METAMORA.

The famous prize-play of Metamora, by John Augustus Stone, is not a work of much genius, and if published would have no literary rank; yet it had all that was essential, in the striking merit of furnishing the genius of the enactor of its leading character the conditions for compassing a popular success of the most remarkable description. With his performance of Metamora, Forrest impressed the masses of the American people in a degree rarely precedented, and won a continental celebrity full of idiomatic enthusiasm. Of course there were good reasons for this warm favor from the surrendered many, despite the disdain of the squeamish few, who can generally enjoy nothing, only conceitedly criticise everything.

In the first place, the subject was indigenous, and thus came home to the American heart and curiosity. In the imagination of our people for more than a century the race of the aborigines of the land were clothed with romantic associations and regretted with a sort of national remorse. The disinterestedness of the fancy and the soul, relieved from all proximity to their squalor, ferocity, and vice, with a beautiful pity lamented their wrongs, their evanescence, and the rapid disappearance of the wigwam and papoose and war-dance and canoe of the painted tribes from hill and glen and wood and lake. In this wide-spread sentimental interest the play took hold of powerful chords. Although prosaic research and experience have so largely divested the character of the Indian of its old romance and made his actual presence a nuisance, nevertheless so long as the memories of our primeval settlements and of our bloody and adventurous frontier traditions shall live, so long will the American Indian be remembered with a sigh as the *lost human poetry* of the nature wherein he was cradled.

Furthermore, the play was stocked with fresh suggestions and images of nature,—a store-house of those simple metaphors drawn direct from the great objects of the universe, full of a rude pathos and sublimity, and so natural to the genius of Indian chief and orator in their talk. There was a piquance of novelty and a refreshing charm to people—hived in towns and cities, and, stifled with artificial customs, almost oblivious of any direct contact of their senses with the solemn elementary phenomena of the surrounding universe—in hearing Metamora speak, in a voice that echoed and painted them, of the woods, the winds, the sun, the cliffs, the torrents, the lakes, the sea, the stars, the thunder, the meadows and the clouds, the wild animals and the singing birds. The meaning of the words so fitly intoned by the player awoke in the nerves of the audience dim reminiscences of ancestral experiences reverberating out of far ages forgotten long ago, and they were bound by a spell themselves understood not.

And then there was the interest of a style of character and life, of an idealized historic picture of a vanished form of human nature and society, all whose elements stood in strange and fascinating contrast with the personal experience of the beholders. It was the first time the American Indian had ever been dramatized and put on the stage; and this was done in a theme based on

one of the romantic episodes of his history embodied in a chieftain of tragic greatness.

In a production of art whose subject and materials lie in the domain of unreclaimed nature, genius is not, indeed, permitted to falsify any fundamental principle or fact, but is free to modify and add. Otherwise, the creative function of art is gone, and only imitation left. In this respect of combined truth and originality, the acted Metamora of Forrest was a wonder never surpassed, in its own kind, in the long story of the stage. He appeared the kingly incarnation of the spirit of the scene, both of the outward landscape and of the taciturn tribe that peopled it with their gliding shapes. He appeared the human lord of the dark wood and the rocky shore, and the natural ruler of their untutored tenants; the soul of the eloquent recital, the noble appeal, and the fiery harangue; the embodiment of a rude magnanimity, a deep domestic love, an unquivering courage and fortitude, an instinctive patriotism and sense of justice, and a relentless revenge. He appeared, too, the votary of a superstition of singular attractiveness, blooming with the native wild-flowers of the human mind, a faith so unaffected and open that it seemed to be read by the stars of the Great Spirit as they looked down on the lone Indian kneeling by the mound of his fathers, the hunted patriot lying in ambush for his foes. Through all this physically-realized, wondrous portraiture of the poetic, the tender, the noble, the awful, the reverential, was mingled the glare of the crouching tiger. It was thus that Forrest in his great creation of Metamora rendered all that there was in the naturalistic poem of Indian life, to all that there was justly adding an infusion of that ideal quality by which art appeals to the nobler feelings of admiration and sympathy in preference to the meaner ones of hate and scorn. In this performance he elaborated a picture of the legendary and historic American Indian which to this day stands alone beyond all rivalry.

Never did an actor more thoroughly identify and merge himself with his part than Forrest did in Metamora. He was completely transformed from what he appeared in other characters, and seemed Indian in every particular, all through and all over, from the crown of his scalp to the sole of his foot. The carriage of his body, the inflections of his voice, his facial expressions, the

very pose of his head and neck on his shoulders, were new. For he had recalled all ois observations while on his visit with Push-ma-ta-ha among the Choctaws, when he had adopted their habits, eaten their food, slept in their tents, echoed the crack of his rifle over the surface of their lakes, and left the print of his moccasins on their hunting-grounds. He had also patiently studied their characteristics from all other available sources. Accordingly, when he came to impersonate Metamora, or the Last of the Wampanoags, modelled by the author of the play after that celebrated New England Sachem, the son of Massasoit, known in history as King Philip of Pokanoket, it was the genuine Indian who was brought upon the stage, merely idealized a little in some of his moral features. The attributes unnoticed by careless observers were distinctly shown,—the sudden muscular movements, the repressed emotion, the peculiar mode of breathing, the deep and vigorous gutturals flung out from the muscular base of the abdomen, and the straight or slightly inward-pointing line of the footfall. With a profound truth to fact, the general bearing of Metamora on ordinary occasions was marked by a dull monotony of manner, broken with awkward abruptness, and his grand poses were limited to those times of great excitement when the human organism, if in a state of dynamic surcharge, is spontaneously electrified with heroic lines, and becomes an instrument with which impersonal passions or the laws of nature gesticulate.

With the single and very proper exception of this partially heightened moral refinement, the counterfeit was so cunningly copied that it might have deceived nature herself. Many a time delegations of Indian tribes who chanced to be visiting the cities where he acted this character—Boston, New York, Washington, Baltimore, Cincinnati, New Orleans—attended the performance, adding a most picturesque feature by their presence, and their pleasure and approval were unqualified. A large delegation of Western Indians, seated in the boxes of the old Tremont Theatre on such an occasion, were so excited by the performance that in the closing scene they rose and chanted a dirge in honor of the death of the great chief.

This incident recalls one which happened in the earliest theatre in Philadelphia, when Mrs. Whitelock, the sister of Mrs. Siddons, was playing, and when Washington was present. At the begin-

ning of the performance a group of Indians, who had come from the wilderness to conclude a treaty, made their appearance in the pit in their native costume. The dark, tall, gaunt figures glided in, and, without noticing the audience or seeming to hear the claps of welcome which greeted them, seated themselves, and fixed their eyes on the stage, as unchangingly as if they were petrified. They sat through the chief play like statues, with immovable tranquillity. But in the after-piece an artificial elephant was introduced, which so electrified these sons of the forest that they suddenly sprang up with a cry. They said there had once been a great beast like this in their land. The next day they called on the manager, inspected the mammoth of sticks, pasteboard, and cloth, and asked to see by daylight the heavenly women who had appeared on the stage the previous night.

The opening scene of Metamora was a glen, with ledges of stone, trees, bushes, running vines, and flowers, the leading character seen, in his picturesque, aboriginal costume, standing on the highest rock in an attitude that charmed the eye. Leaning forward on his firmly-planted right foot, the left foot thrown easily back on its tip, he had a bow in his hands, with the arrow sprung to its head. As the arrow sped from the twanging string he raised his eyes with eager gaze after it, gave a deep interjection, "Hah!" bounded upon a rock below, and vanished. In a few moments he re-entered, with his left arm bleeding, as if it had been bitten in a struggle with a wild beast. Oceana, a white maiden, passing, sees his wound and offers him her scarf to bind it up. The mother of Oceana had once befriended Massasoit when he was sick. Metamora, in his gratitude, had visited her grave with offerings for the dead, and, on such an occasion, had rescued Oceana from a panther. He hesitates before accepting, and fills the delay with a by-play of pantomime so true to Indian nature, so new and strange to the spectators, that it was invested with an absorbing interest. At length he says, "Metamora will take the white maiden's gift." He then gives her an eagle's feather, bids her wear it in her hair, and if she is ever in danger he will fly to her rescue at the sight of this pledge of his friendship.

As the play moves on, the audience are gradually borne back to the early days of their fathers, and their dread struggle to

establish themselves on these Western shores. We see the thin and thriving settlements constantly augmenting with reinforcements, and pushing the natives before them. We are taken within the homes of the Indians, shown their better qualities, their hopeless efforts, their mixed resolution and misgiving before their coming fate. Our sympathies are enlisted, before we know it, with the defeated party against ourselves; and thus the author and actor won their just victory. For the English are made to represent power and fraud, the Indians truth and patriotism; and when their fugitive king pauses on a lofty cliff in the light of the setting sun, gazes mournfully on the lost hunting-grounds and desecrated graves of his forefathers, and launches his curse on their destroyers, every heart beats with sorrow for him.

The class of speeches in which the instinctive love of nature that unconsciously saturated the Indian soul is expressed, and the closeness of their daily life to the elements of the landscape and the phenomena of the seasons is revealed, were delivered with matchless effect. Metamora, poised like the bronze statue of some god of the antique, says, "I have been upon the high mountain-top when the gray mists were beneath my feet, and the Great Spirit passed by me in wrath. He spoke in anger, and the rocks crumbled beneath the flash of his spear. Then I felt proud and smiled. The white man trembles, but Metamora is not afraid."

And again: "The war and the chase are the red man's brother and sister. The storm-cloud in its fury frights him not; and when the stream is wild and broken his canoe is like a feather, that cannot drown."

Another class of speeches, equally unique in character, and breathing with compressed passion, were those in which the relative positions of the intruding race and the native lords of the soil were described. The style with which these were pronounced made the form of the actor seem a new tenement in which the departed Sachem of the Pequots lived and spoke again. "*Your* lands?" he exclaims, with sarcastic disdain. "They are mine. Climb upon the rock and look to the sunrise and to the sunset,—all that you see is the land of the Wampanoags, the land of Metamora. I am the white man's friend; but when my friendship is over I will not ask the white man if I have the right to be his

foe. Metamora will love and hate, smoke the pipe of peace or draw the hatchet of battle, as seems good to him. He will not wrong his white brother, but he owns no master save Manito, Master of Heaven."

And at another time: "The pale-faces are around me thicker than the leaves of summer. I chase the hart in the hunting-grounds; he leads me to the white man's village. I drive my canoe into the rivers; they are full of the white man's ships. I visit the graves of my fathers; they are lost in the white man's corn-fields. They come like the waves of the ocean forever rolling upon the shores. Surge after surge, they dash upon the beach, and every foam-drop is a white man. They swarm over the land like the doves of winter, and the red men are dropping like withered leaves."

In these passages his declamation seemed to make the whole tragedy of the story of the American Indians breathe and swell and tremble.

A wonderful interest, too, was concentrated in the personal traits of Metamora himself as an individual; so true to his word, so faithful to his friend, so devoted to his wife and child, so proud of his land and his fathers, so fearless of his foe, so reverential before his God. "To his friend Metamora is like the willow,—he bends ever at the breath of those that love him. To others he is an oak. Until with your single arm you can rive the strongest tree of the forest from its earth, think not to stir Metamora when his heart says No."

In the earliest scene with his wife, when ready to start on a hunt, he lingered, and directed her to take her child from its couch on the earth. He then lifted it in his hands, and stood for several seconds in an attitude so superbly defined in its outlines of strength and grace that several pictures of it were published at the time. He asked, with a look of fondness, suppressing his stern reserve, "Dost thou not love this little one, Nahmeokee?" "Ah, yes!" she replied. He then continued, in a caressing murmur like the runneling music of a brook, "When first his little eyes unclosed, thou saidst that they were like to mine." The expression of human love was so simple and complete, and so exquisitely set in the wild seclusion of nature, suggestive of the self-sufficingness of this little nest of affection embosomed in the

wood and forgetful of all else in the world, that it made many a soft heart beat fast with an aching wish that stayed long after the scene was gone.

In a later scene he describes to his wife a vision he has had in the night. He relates it in a rich, subdued undertone, waxing intenser, and giving the hearer a mixed feeling of mysterious reverie and prophetic inspiration. "Nahmeokee, the power of dreams has been on me, and the shadows of things to be have passed before me. My heart is big with great thoughts. When I sleep, I think the knife is red in my hand and the scalp of the white man is streaming." Here he gave an additional height to his figure, a slight downward inclination to his head and eyes, dropped his left arm listlessly, and, while the two halves of his whole form were seen finely distinguished along the median line, with his right hand, extended to its fullest distance straight from the shoulder, grasped his bow, which stood perfectly erect from the ground. It was a posture of beautiful artistic precision and meaning, expressive of reflection with a quality of earnest listening in it, as if waiting for a reply. The words of Nahmeokee, not fitting his mood, slightly ruffled his temper, and then, with a crisp tone of voice which in its change of quality and accent was so unexpected that it was like a sudden sweep of the wind that rustles the dry leaves and hums through the wood, he said, "Yes, when our fires are no longer red in the high places of our fathers, —when the bones of our kindred make fruitful the fields the stranger has planted amid the ashes of our wigwams,—when we are hunted back like the wounded elk far towards the going down of the sun,—our hatchets broken, our bows unstrung, and our war-whoops hushed,—then will the stranger spare; for we shall be too small for his eye to see!"

The controversy between the natives and the new settlers having reached a perilous height, the latter dispatch a messenger asking Metamora to meet them in council. Very angry, and deeming all talk useless, he yet concludes to go. Unannounced, abruptly, he makes his peremptory appearance amidst them. Settling strongly back on his right leg, his left advanced at ease with bent knee, his right side half presented, his face turned squarely towards them, he says, with Spartan curtness, and in a manner not insolent, and yet indescribably defiant, "You sent for

me, and I have come." His action was so wonderfully expressive in speaking these few words that they became a popular phrase, circulating in the mouths of men in all parts of the country.

The same result also followed in another and simpler scene. He had promised to meet the English at a certain time and place. They demanded of him, "Will you come?" By mere force of manner he gave an immense impressiveness to the simple reply, "Metamora cannot lie." The very boys in the streets were seen trying to imitate his posture and look, swelling their little throats to make the words sound big, as they repeated, "Metamora cannot lie."

In an interview with the English, after deadly hostilities have begun to rage, Aganemo, a subject of Metamora, who, for some supposed wrong, has turned against him, is called in, and bears testimony against his chief and his tribe. Metamora cries, "Let me see his eyes;" and, going close in front of him, addresses the cowering recreant: "Look me in the face, Aganemo. Thou turnest away. The spirit of a dog has entered thee, and thou crouchest. Dost thou come here with a lie in thy heart to witness against me? Thine eye cannot rest on thy chieftain. White men, can he speak words of truth who has been false to his nation and false to his friends?" Fitz Arnold says, "Send him hence." Metamora interposes with an imperial mien full of dread import, "I will do that," and strikes him dead on the spot, exclaiming, "Slave of the whites, follow Sassamon,"—Sassamon being the name of another traitor whom he had previously slain in the midst of his own braves.

Fitz Arnold orders his men to seize the high-handed executioner of their witness. Towering alone in solitary and solid grandeur, with accents and gestures whose impassioned sincerity painted every thought as a visible reality and made the excited audience lean out of their seats, Metamora hurled back his electric defiance:

"Come! my knife has drunk the blood of the traitor, but it is not satisfied. Men of the pale race, beware! The mighty spirits of the Wampanoags are hovering over your heads. They stretch their shadowy arms and call for vengeance. They shall have it. Tremble! From East to West, from the South to the North, the tribes have roused from their slumbers. They grasp the

hatchet. The pale-faces shall wither under their power. White men, Metamora is your foe!"

The soldiers level their guns at him. He suddenly seizes a white man and places him before himself. The living shield thus extemporized falls, perforated with bullets. Metamora hurls his tomahawk to the floor, where it sticks quivering, while he cries, "Thus do I defy your power!" and darts away, leaving them dumb with astonishment.

The pathos with which Forrest rendered portions of the play of Metamora was one of its most remarkable excellences and one of his most distinctive trophies as a dramatic artist. No theory of the passions or mere mechanical drill in their expression can ever teach a man to be pathetic. Only a disagreeable mockery of it can thus come. Pathos is the one particular affection that knows no deceit, but comes in truth direct from the soul and goes direct to the soul. It may lie dormant in us, as music lies in the strings of a silent harp, till a touch gives it life. Speaking more or less in all, it speaks most in those who cherish it most; and when it speaks it is felt by all,—red man and white man, barbarian and philosopher. The pathos of Metamora was not like that of Damon when he parted with his family to go to his execution, not like that of Brutus when he sentenced his son to death, not like that of Virginius when he slew his daughter. It was a pathos without tears or gesture. The Indian warrior never weeps. It was almost solely a pathos of the voice, and was as broad and primitive as the unperverted faith and affection of man. The supreme example of this quality in the play was finely set off by the contrast that immediately foreran it, its soft, sad shades following a scene of lurid fury and grandeur.

A peace-runner brings Metamora the news that Nahmeokee is a captive in the power of his enemies. Leaving fifty white men bound as hostages to secure his own safety, he starts alone to deliver her. As he approaches the English camp, he hears Nahmeokee shriek. With one bound he bursts in upon them, levels his gun, and thunders,—

"Which of you has lived too long? Dogs of white men, do you lift your hands against a woman?" "Seize him!" they cry, but shrink from his movement. "Hah!" he scornfully exclaims, "it is now a warrior who stands before you, the fire-weapon in

his hands. Who, then, shall seize him? Go, Nahmeokee; I will follow thee." Then, reminding them of his hostages, he turns on his heel and departs.

He is next discovered, with a slow and heavy step, approaching his wigwam, where his rescued wife waits to receive him. He has seen that the too unequal struggle of his countrymen is hopeless, and he appears sad and gloomy. Telling Nahmeokee, who looks broken with grief, that he is weary with the strife of blood, he says, "Bring me thy little one, that I may press him to my burning heart to quiet its tumult." Without his knowledge, the child had been killed by the white men a few hours previous. The mother goes where the child is lying upon the ground, lifts the skin that covers him, points at him, and drops her head in tears. Metamora looks at the child, at the mother, stoops, and, with rapid motions, feels the little face, arms, and legs. Suppressing the start of horror and the cry of grief a white man would have given, he sinks his chin slowly upon his breast and heaves a deep sigh, and then utters the simple words, "Dead! cold!" in a tone low as if to be heard by himself alone, and sounding like the wail of a sorrow in some far-away world. Having lifted the dead child and fondled it in his bosom and laid it tenderly back, he walks slowly to the weeping Nahmeokee, places his hand on her shoulder, and says, in a soft voice quivering with the tears not suffered to mount in the eyes, "Well, is he not happy? Better that he should die by the stranger's hand than live to be his slave. Do not bow down thy head. Thou wilt see him again in the happy land of the spirits; and he will look smilingly as—as—as I do now." Here the quality of smilingness was in the tones of the voice only, while his face wore the impress of intense grief. The voice and face thus contradicting each other presented a pathos so overwhelming that it seemed as if nothing human could surpass it or resist it.

His manner now changes. Some great resolution seems to have arisen in him. His words have a tender yet ominous meaning in their inflection as he asks Nahmeokee, "Do you not fear the power of the white man? He might seize thee and bear thee off to his far country, bind those arms that have so often clasped me, and make thee his slave. We cannot fly: our foes are all about us. We cannot fight, for this [drawing his long

knife] is the only weapon I have saved unbroken from the strife. It has tasted the white man's blood and reached the cold heart of the traitor. It has been our best friend, and it is now our only treasure." Here he drew her still closer, and placed her head on his bosom, and, with the long knife in his hand, pointed upwards, and with an alluring, indescribably sweet and aerial falsetto tone, painted a picture that seemed to take form and color in the very atmosphere. There was a weird dreaminess in his voice and a visionary abstractness in his gaze, as with the words "long path in the thin air," he indicated the heavenward journey of his dead child, that seemed actually to dissolve the whole scene, theatre, actor, spectators, and all, into a passing vapor, an ethereal enchantment.

"I look through the long path in the thin air, and think I see our little one borne to the land of the happy, where the fair hunting-grounds never know snows or storms, and where the immortal brave feast under the eyes of the Giver of Good. Look upward, Nahmeokee! See, thy child looks back to thee, and beckons thee to follow." Drawing her closer with his left arm, and lowering his right, he whispers, "Hark! In the distant wood I faintly hear the tread of the white men. They are upon us! The home of the happy is made ready for thee!" While this picture of fear and hope is vivid before her mind, he strikes the blow, and in an instant she is dead in his arms. He clasps her to his breast, presses his lips on her forehead, and gently places her beside the dead child. He then shudders, and draws forth the knife sheathed in her side, and kisses its blade in a sudden transport, exclaiming, "She knew no bondage to the white men. Pure as the snow she lived, free as the air she died!"

At this moment the hills are covered with the white men, pointing their rifles at his heart. "Hah!" he cries. Their leader shouts, "Metamora is our prisoner!" "No," he proudly responds, dilating with the haughtiest port of defiance. "I live, the last of my race, live to defy you still, though numbers and treachery overpower me. Come to me, come singly, come all, and this knife, which has drunk the foul blood of your nation, and is now red with the purest of mine, will feel a grasp as strong as when it flashed in the glare of your burning dwellings or was lifted terribly over the fallen in battle."

The order is given to fire upon him; and he replies, "Do so. I am weary of the world; for ye are dwellers in it. I would not turn on my heel to save my life." They shoot, and he staggers, but in his dying agonies launches on them his awful malediction:

"My curses on ye, white men! May the Great Spirit curse ye when he speaks in his war-voice from the clouds! May his words be like the forked lightnings, to blast and desolate! May the loud winds and the fierce red flames be loosed in vengeance upon ye, tigers! May the angry Spirit of the Waters in his wrath sweep over your dwellings! May your graves and the graves of your children be in the path where the red man shall tread, and may the wolf and the panther howl over your fleshless bones! I go. My fathers beckon from the green lakes and the broad hills. The Great Spirit calls me. I go,—but the curses of Metamora stay with the white men!"

He crawls painfully to the bodies of his wife and child, and, in a vain effort to kiss them, expires, with his last gasp mixing the words, "I die—my wife, my queen—my Nahmeokee!"

SPARTACUS.

"The Gladiator," written by Robert Montgomery Bird, was another prize-play, in which Forrest acquired a popularity which, if less general, was more intense, than that secured for his Metamora. If the admiration and applause given to it were drawn less universally from men and women, from old and young, they were more fervent and sustained, being fed by those elementary instincts which are strongest in the robust multitude. The Spartacus of Forrest was more abused and satirized by hostile critics than any of his other parts, because it was the most "physical" and "melodramatic" of them all. Muscular exertion and ferocious passion were carried to their greatest pitch in it, though neither of these was displayed in a degree beyond sincerity and fitness or the demands of the given situations on the given embodiment of the character. There are actual types of men and actual scenes of life which are transcendently "physical" and "melodramatic." No actor can truly represent such specimens of human nature and such conjunctures of human history *without* being highly "physical" and profoundly "melodramatic." Is it not the office of the player, the very aim of his art, correctly to depict the truth of man

and life? And, recollecting what sort of a person the veritable Thracian gladiator was, and what sort of a part he played, one may well ask how he can be justly impersonated on the stage if *not* invested with the attributes of brawny muscularity, terrific indignation, stentorian speech, and merciless revenge. Forrest was blamed and ridiculed by a coterie because he did exactly what, as an artist cast in such a rôle, he ought to do, and any deviation from which would have been a gross violation of propriety. He simply exhibited tremendous mental and physical realities with tremendous mental and physical realism. What else would the demurrer have?

The fact is, the cant words "physical" and "melodramatic," as demeaningly used in dramatic criticism, express a vulgar prejudice too prevalent among the educated and refined,—a prejudice infinitely more harmful than any related prejudice of the ignorant and coarse. They seem to fancy the body something vile, to be ashamed of, to receive as little attention and be kept as much out of sight as possible. But since God created the body as truly as he did the spirit, and decreed its uses as much as he did those of the spirit, the perfecting and glorifying of the former are just as legitimate as the perfecting and glorifying of the latter. The ecclesiastical interpretation of Christianity for these fifteen hundred years is responsible, in common with kindred ascetic superstitions of other and elder religions, for an incalculable amount of disease, deformity, vice, crime, and untimely death. The contempt for bodily power and its material conditions in a superbly-developed and trained physical organism, the foul and dishonoring notion of the superior sanctity of the celibate state, the teaching that chastity is the one thing that allies us to the angels, *with* which every other sin may be forgiven, *without* which no other virtue is to be recognized,—these and associated errors — discords, distortions, and inversions of nature — have been prolific sources of evil. They lie at the root of the so common prejudice against a magnificent and glowing condition of the physical organism, a prejudice which feeds the conceit of the votaries of the present mental forcing system, and causes so many dawdling idlers to neglect all use of those vigorous measures of gymnastic hygiene which would raise the power and splendor of body and soul together to their maximum.

The type of man produced by the Athenians in their best age, its unrivalled combination of health and strength, energy and grace, acumen and sensibility, organic harmony of mental peace and vital joy, was very largely the fruit of their unrivalled system of gymnastics regulated by music. Free America, with this example and so much subsequent experience, with all the conquests of modern science at her command, should inaugurate a system of popular training which will acknowledge the equal sanctity of body and soul and render them worthy of each other, a union of athletic and æsthetic culture making the body the temporary illuminated temple of its indwelling immortal divinity.

The separating of human nature into opposed parts whose respective highest welfare is incompatible must ever be productive of all kinds of morbidity, monstrosity, and horror, through the final reactions of the violated harmony of truth. Leading to the enforced culture of one side, the mental, and the enforced neglect of the other, the material, it is fatal to that rounded wholeness of the entire man which is the synonym of both health and virtue. For the helpless subsidence of the soul in the body is brutality or idiocy; the insurrectionary sway of the body over the soul is insanity; the remorseless subdual of the body by the soul is egotistic asceticism or murderous ferocity; but the parallel development and exaltation of accordant body and soul give us the ideal of health and happiness fulfilled in beauty, or the enthronement of divine order in man. Therefore such a stimulating instance of organic glory, extraordinary outward poise and inward passion, as the people, thrilled in their most instinctive depths of enthusiasm, used to shout at when they saw Forrest in his early assumptions of the rôle of Spartacus, is not to be stigmatized as something offensive, but to be hailed as something admirable.

In those happy and glowing years of his prime and of his fresh celebrity, what a glorious image of unperverted manhood, of personified health and strength and beauty, he presented! What a grand form he had! What a grand face! What a grand voice! And, the living base of all, what a grand blood! the rich flowing seed-bed of his human thunder and lightning. As he stepped upon the stage in his naked fighting-trim, his muscular coating unified all over him and quivering with vital power, his skin polished by exercise and friction to a smooth and marble hardness, conscious

of his enormous potency, fearless of anything on the earth, proudly aware of the impression he knew his mere appearance, backed by his fame, would make on the audience who impatiently awaited him,—he used to stand and receive the long, tumultuous cheering that greeted him, as immovable as a planted statue of Hercules. In the rank and state of his physical organism and its feelings he had the superiority of a god over common men. The spectacle, let it be repeated, was worthy the admiration it won. And had the personal imitation of the care and training he gave himself been but equal to the admiration lavished on their result, the benefit to the American people would have been beyond estimate. But in this, as in the other lessons of the drama, the example was relatively fruitless, because shown to spectators who applaud without copying, seeking entertainment instead of instruction. This, however, is clearly the fault of the people, and not of the stage.

The play of "The Gladiator" is founded on that dark and frightful episode in the history of Rome, the famous servile war headed by the gladiators under the lead of Spartacus. Our sympathies are skilfully enlisted on the side of the insurgents, who are goaded to their desperate enterprise by insufferable wrongs and cruelties. It abounds in pictures of insolent tyranny on one side, and with eloquent denunciation and fearless resistance on the other, and the chief character is a powerful presentation of a deep and generous manhood, outraged in every fibre, lashed to fury by his injuries, and, after superhuman efforts of revenge, expiring in monumental despair and appeal to the gods. The horrors of oppression, the irrepressible dignity of human nature, the reckless luxury of the rulers, the suffering of the slaves, the revolting arrogance of despotism, and the burning passion of liberty, are set against one another; and all through it the mighty figure of Spartacus is made to fill the central place. It was just the part for a democrat, who, despising what is factitious, gloried in the ineradicable attributes of free manhood; and Forrest made the most of it. For instance, it is easy for those who knew him to imagine the energy and relish with which he would utter the following lines when he came to them in his part:

> "I thank the gods, I am barbarian;
> For I can better teach the grace-begot
> And heaven-supported masters of the earth,

How a mere dweller of a desert rock
Can bow their crowned heads to his chariot-wheels.
Man is heaven's work, and beggars' brats may herit
A soul to mount them up the steeps of fortune,
With regal necks to be their stepping-blocks."

In the intense sincerity and elaborate as well as spontaneous truth of his performance, it was not a play that the spectators saw, but a history; not a history, but a resurrection. Entering in the garb of a slave, bound and whipped, his mighty frame and terrible aspect made the abuse seem more awful. Tortured with insulting questions, his proud spirit stung by wrong on wrong, he broke forth in desperation, and carried the passions of the audience by storm, as with clenched hands, and half erect from their seats, while the blood ran quicker through their veins, they saw him rush into combat with his enemies and chase them from the stage. They delighted to see the cruel subduer of the world humbled by her own captive, who held her haughty prætors by the heart and called on Thrace, on Africa, on the oppressed of all nations, to pour the flood of their united hates on the detested city. They rejoiced to hear him recite with bitter eloquence the story of her degradation, and heap on her with hot scorn the recollection of the time when Tiber ran blood and Hannibal hung over her like a cloud charged with ruin. Every step, every word, vibrated on their feelings, and when he fell their hearts swelled with a pang. For the actor had been lost in the slave, the insurgent, the conqueror, the victim.

His first appearance as a captive in imperial Rome was deeply affecting. "Is it a thousand leagues to Thrace?" he said, with a whispered agony, the deadly lament of hopeless exile. He has been purchased by Lentulus, an exhibitor of gladiators, on the strength of the report that he was the most desperate, skilful, and unconquerable fighter in the province. Bracchius, another proprietor of gladiators, owns one Phasarius, a Thracian, who has always been victorious in his combats. Phasarius was a younger and favorite brother of Spartacus, supposed to have been killed in battle years before, but really taken captive and brought to Rome. Now Bracchius and Lentulus propose a combat between their two slaves. Spartacus, chained, is ordered in. He asks, "Is not this Rome, the great city?" Bracchius replies,

"Ay, and thou shouldst thank the gods that they have suffered thee to see it. What think'st thou of it?"

"*Spartacus.* That if the Romans had not been fiends, Rome had never been great. Whence came this greatness but from the miseries of subjugated nations? How many myriads of happy people that had not wronged Rome, for they knew not Rome,—how many myriads of these were slain, like the beasts of the field, that Rome might fatten upon their blood, and become great? Look ye, Roman, there is not a palace upon these hills that cost not the lives of a thousand innocent men; there is no deed of greatness ye can boast, but it was achieved by the ruin of a nation; there is no joy ye can feel, but its ingredients are blood and tears."

Lentulus breaks in, "Now, marry, villain, thou wert bought not to prate, but to fight."

"*Spartacus.* I will not fight. I will contend with mine enemy, when there is strife between us; and if that enemy be one of these same fiends, a Roman, I will give him the advantage of weapon and place; he shall take a helmet and buckler, while I, with my head bare and my breast naked, and nothing in my hand but my shepherd's staff, will beat him to my feet and slay him. But I will not slay a man for the diversion of Romans."

His master threatens to have him lashed if he refuses to contend in the arena. The fearful attitude and fixed look with which Spartacus received this threat, suggesting that he would strike the speaker dead with a glance, were a masterpiece of expressive art not easily forgotten by any one who saw it. Its possessing power seemed to freeze the gazer while he gazed. Still refusing to fight, in moody despair he bewails the destruction of his home by the Romans, and their murder of his wife and young child. The female slaves of Bracchius here pass by, and, to his amazement, among them Spartacus sees his lost Senona and her boy. After a touching interview of contending joy and grief with them, he agrees to enter the arena, on condition that if he is victorious his reward shall be their liberation.

The next act opens with a view of the great Roman amphitheatre, crowded with the people gathered to see those bloody games which were their horrid but favorite amusement. The first adversary brought against Spartacus is a Gaul. He soon slays

him, though with great reluctance, and only as moved to it by the prospect of freedom for his wife and child. Then they propose as a second champion a renowned Thracian. He flings down his sword and refuses to fight with one of his own countrymen. But at last, on learning that liberty is to be had in no other way, he suddenly yields. The Thracian is introduced. It is Phasarius. A scene of intense pathetic power follows, as little by little the brothers are struck with each other's appearance, suspect, inquire, respond, are satisfied, and rush into a loving embrace. The prætor treats their recognition and their transport of fraternal affection as a trick to escape the combat, and orders them to begin. Spartacus proposes to his brother to die sword in hand rather than obey the unnatural command. In reply, Phasarius rapidly informs him that he has already organized the elements of a revolt among his comrades, and that it awaits but his signal to break out. Crassus angrily calls on his guards to enter the amphitheatre and punish the dilatory combatants. The manner in which Spartacus retorted, "Let them come in,—we are armed!" never failed to stir the deepest excitement in the theatre, causing the whole assembly to join in enthusiastic applause. Port, look, gesture, tone, accent, combined to make it a signal example of the sovereign potency of manner in revealing a master-spirit and swaying subject-spirits.

On the entrance of the guards, Phasarius gives a shout, and the confederate gladiators also plunge in, and a general conflict begins. In this scene the acting of Forrest absorbed his whole heart. He was so thoroughly imbued with the spirit of it that everything he did was perfectly natural, full of that genuine fire which is so much beyond all exertion by rule. It was universally agreed that more spirited and admirable fighting was hardly to be conceived, the varied postures into which he threw his massive form being worthy to be taken as studies for the sculptor.

The rebellion grows apace in success and numbers. Spartacus rescues his wife and child from the Roman camp, and seizes the niece of the prætor. Phasarius falls in love with this young woman, and demands her of his brother. Being refused because she is affianced to a youth in Rome, he insists on his demand. In the altercation occurs one of the finest and loftiest passages in the play, and it was rendered with a sublime eloquence:

"*Spartacus.* Come, look me in the face,
And let me see how bad desires have changed thee.
Phasarius. I claim the captive.
Spar. Set thine eye on her:
Lo, you! she weeps, and she is fatherless.
Thou couldst not harm an orphan? What, I say,
Art thou, whom I have carried in my arms
To mountain-tops to worship the great God,
Art thou a man to plot a wrong and sorrow
'Gainst such as have no father left but Him?"

Phasarius revolts, and takes off more than half the army. Disastrously defeated by Crassus, he returns with a broken fragment of his forces, and is generously forgiven and restored to favor by Spartacus, who intrusts him with an important separate command, and confides Senona and her boy to his keeping, with the solemn charge that he shall avoid all collision with the enemy. Phasarius, however, thirsting for Roman blood, seeks an engagement, and is totally routed, his force cut in pieces, and the mother and child both slain. The unhappy man, then, mortally wounded, presents himself before his brother, tells his fearful tale, and expires at his feet. In this interview the emotions of anxiety, deprecation, grief, wrath, and horror, were depicted in all their most forcible language in the person of Spartacus. One action in particular was effective in the highest degree. Phasarius described the crucifixion by the Romans of six thousand of their Thracian captives. The highway on both sides, he said, was lined with crosses, and on each cross was nailed a gladiator.

"I crept
Thro' the trenched army to that road, and saw
The executed multitude uplifted
Upon the horrid engines. Many lived:
Some moaned and writhed in stupid agony;
Some howled and prayed for death, and cursed the gods;
Some turned to lunatics, and laughed at horror;
And some with fierce and hellish strength had torn
Their arms free from the beams, and so had died
Grasping headlong the air."

The agitations of the soul of the listener up to this point had been delineated with fearful distinctness. But when told that his wife and child had been killed, his head suddenly fell forward on his breast and rested there, after vibrating four or five times

in lessening degrees on the pivot of the neck, as if utterly abandoned to itself. It was marvellously expressive of the exhausted state, the woe-begone despair, of one who had received a shock too great to be borne, a shock which, had it been a little severer, would have prostrated his whole figure, but, as it was, simply prostrated his head.

Deprived of all his kindred and of all hope, alone on the flinty earth, rage and recklessness now seize the desolate Thracian, and he resolves to sacrifice his captive, the niece of the prætor, in retaliation for the slaughter of his own family; but a nobler sentiment restrains him, and he dismisses her to her father. In this passage he displayed the agony of generous grief subduing the desire of vengeance with a power which, as a prominent English critic said, reminded the beholder of the head of Laocöon struggling in the folds of the serpent, or of the head of Hercules writhing under the torture of the poisoned shirt.

The prætor in return for his daughter sends Spartacus an offer of pardon if he will surrender. Disdainfully rejecting the overture, he has the horses in his camp slain, and sets everything on the chance of one more battle, but against such odds as he knows can result only in his defeat. With a frenzied thirst for vengeance he fights his way to the presence of the Roman general, and, in the very act of striking him down, exhausted from the accumulated wounds received in his passage of blood, grows faint, reels, falls in the exact attitude of the immortal statue of the Dying Gladiator, and expires.

A most remarkable proof of the histrionic genius of Forrest was given in the profoundly discriminated manner with which the same mass and fury of revengeful passion, the same rude breadth and tenderness of affection and pathos, were shown by him in the two characters of Metamora and Spartacus. In the Indian there was a stoical compression of the emotions out of their revealing channels, an organic suppression of starts and surprises and lamentations, a profound impassibility of demeanor, an exterior of slow, stubborn, monotonous self-possession, through which the volcanic ferocity of the interior crept in words of slow lava, or flared as fire through a smouldering heap of cinders. In the Thracian there was more variety as well as incomparably more freedom and impulsiveness of expression. The exterior and in-

terior corresponded with each other and mutually reflected instead of contradicting each other. In different exigencies the gladiator exhibited in his whole person, limbs, torse, face, eyes, and voice, the extremes of sullen stolidity, pining sorrow, convulsive grief, ambitious pride, pity, anger, resolution, and despair, each well shaded from the others. He had a wider gamut, as civilization is more comprehensive than barbarism. The movements and expressions of Metamora seemed to be instinctive, and originate in the nervous centres of the physique; those of Spartacus to be volitional, originating in the cerebral centres. In civilized life the body tends to be the reflex of the brain; in savage life the brain to be the reflex of the body. This historic and physiological truth Forrest knew nothing about, but the practical results of the fact he intuitively observed.

The seven characters, now described as fully as the writer can do it with the data at his command, were the favorite ones in which Forrest had gained his greenest laurels at the time of his visit to Europe. Jaffier, Octavian, Sir Edward Mortimer, Sir Giles Overreach, Iago, and other kindred parts, which he often acted with distinguished ability and acceptance, he liked less and less, and gradually dropped them altogether. In Febro, Cade, Melnotte, and Richelieu he had not yet appeared. His Richard, Macbeth, Othello, Lear, Hamlet, and Coriolanus will be more appropriately treated in a later chapter of his life, when he had elaborated his conceptions of them to the highest finish in his power. But his performances at the time now under consideration were, in their spiritual substance, their general treatment and outlines, what they remained to the end. The subsequent changes were merely improvements in details, in gradual climax, in grouping, in symmetry and unity. With his advancing years and experience and study, more and more the parts were made to grow before the audience, so to speak, from their roots upward, gaining strength and expansion as they rose. Gusty irregularity, crudity, misproportion, discord, were carefully struck out, and harmony secured by the just blending of light and shade. But from first to last his style was consistent, and, like his personality, knew no revolutions, only development.

In the practice of his profession it was a noble characteristic of

Forrest that he disliked to impersonate essentially bad or ignoble characters. He hated to set forth passions, thoughts, or sentiments meant to be regarded as base and repulsive, unless, indeed, it was to make them odious and hold them up to detestation. Into this work he threw himself with a gusto that was extreme. He was but too vehement in the utterance of sarcastic denunciations of every form of meanness or cruelty, his relish of the excoriation being often too keen, his inflection of tone too widely sweeping, and his emphasis too prolonged for the measure of any average sympathy. All was sincere with him in it, but his expression was pitched in the scale of reality, while the appreciation of the listeners was only pitched in the calmer scale of ideality.

He loved to stand out in some commanding form of virtue, heroism, or struggle, battling with trials that would appall common souls, setting a great example, and evoking enthusiasm. This was his glory. The zeal with which he ever regarded this phase of his profession, the delight with which he revelled in the contemplation of ideal strength, fortitude, courage, devotion, was a grand attribute of his soul. Accordingly, all his favorite parts were expressions of a high-souled manhood, reverential towards God, truth, and justice, and fearing nothing; a proud integrity and hardiness competent to every emergency of life and death; an unbending will, based on right and entwined with the central virtues of honor, friendship, domestic love, and patriotic ardor. And surely these are the qualities best deserving universal respect, the democratic ideals most wholesome to be cultivated. This is what he most innately loved and stood on the stage to represent. He did it with immense earnestness and immense individuality. He did it also with a conscientious devotion to his chosen art and profession that never faltered. In none of his performances was there ever anything in the least degree savoring of pruriency or indelicacy. Never, after his boyhood was past, could he be induced to appear in any trivial or unmeaning rôle, destitute of moral purpose and dignity. With not one of those many innovations which have detracted so much from the rank and purity of the drama was his name ever associated. He was ever strongly averse in his own person to touching in any way any play which was not enriched and elevated by some imaginative romantic or heroic creation. And, with a world-

wide removal from the so common frivolity and carelessness of his associates on the boards, he approached every one of his performances with a studious sobriety, and went through it with an undeniable dignity and earnestness, which should have lifted him beyond the reach of ridicule, whatever were the faults an honorable criticism might affirm.

The substance of the honest objections made to his acting may be designated as ascribing to it two faults, an excess and a defect. The excess was too much display of physical and spiritual force in the expression of contemptuous or revengeful and destructive passion. There was a basis for this charge, though the accusation was grossly exaggerated. The muscular and passional strength and intensity of Forrest, both by constitution and by culture, were so much beyond those of ordinary men that a manifestation of them which was entirely natural and within the bounds to him often seemed to them a huge extravagance, a wilful overdoing for the sake of making a sensation. In him it was perfectly genuine and not immoderate by the tests of nature, while to them it appeared far to transgress the modest limits of truth. Of course such explosions repelled and pained, sometimes revolted, the sensibilities of the delicate and fastidious, while the more ungirdled and terrific they were, so much the greater was the pleased and wondering approval of those whose sympathies were stormed and self-surrendered. Such was the histrionic fault of excess in Forrest, if it may not rather be called the fault of those whose natures were keyed so much below his that they could not come into tune with him.

The defect corresponding to this excess was lack of *souplesse*, physical and spiritual mobility. He was unquestionably deficient, when tried by a severe standard, in bright, alert, expectant, rich freedom of play in nerves and faculties. His disposition was comparatively obstinate in its pertinacity, and his body adhesive in its heaviness. This gave him the ponderous weight of unity, the antique port of the gods, but it robbed him in a degree of that supreme grace which is the ability to compass the largest effects of impression with the smallest expenditure of energy. It cannot be denied that he needed exactly what Garrick had in such perfection, namely, that detached personality, that quicksilver liberty and rapidity of motion, which made the great Eng-

lish actor such a memorable paragon of variety and charm. Yet, when these abatements are all allowed, enough remains amply to justify his large historic claim in the honest massiveness and glow of his delineations, set off alike by the imposing physique fit to take the club and pose for a Farnesian Hercules, by a studious and manly art unmarred with any insincere trickery, and by a powerful mellow voice of vast compass and flexible intonation, whose declamation, modelled on nature, and without theatrical affectation, ever did full justice to noble thoughts and beautiful words.

Cibber said, in allusion to Betterton, "Pity it is that the momentary beauties from an harmonious elocution cannot be their own record, that the animated graces of the player can live no longer than the instant breath and motion that presents them, or at best but faintly glimmer through the memory or imperfect attestation of a few surviving spectators." Could the author of this biography paint in their true forms and colors and with full completeness the once vivid and vigorous achievements of the buried master, had he with sufficient knowledge and memory command of some notation whereby he could record every light and shade of each great rôle so that they might be revived from the dead symbols in all the lustre of their original reality, even as a musician translates from the dormant score into living music an overture of Mozart or a symphony of Beethoven, then were there a deathless Forrest breathing in these pages who should stir the souls of generations of readers to rise and mutiny against the depreciating estimates of his forgotten foes and the encroachments of literary oblivion. But, alas! to such a task the pen that essays the tribute is unequal, and the writer must be content with the pale presentments he can but imperfectly produce, sighing to think how true is the refrain of regret taken up in every age by those who have mourned a departed actor, and never better worded, perhaps, than in the famous lines by Garrick:

> "The painter dead, yet still he charms the eye;
> While taste survives, his fame can never die.
> But he who *struts his hour upon the stage*
> Can scarce extend his fame for half an age.
> Nor pen nor pencil can the *actor* save,—
> The art and artist share one common grave."

CHAPTER X.

TWO YEARS OF RECREATION AND STUDY IN THE OLD WORLD.

THE parting cheers died into silence, the ship began to speed through the spray, the forms of his friends receded and vanished, the roofs and spires of the city lowered and faded, the sun sank in the west, the hills of Neversink subsided below the horizon, and only the gliding vessel and her foamy wake broke the expanse of ocean and sky, when the outward-bound Forrest for the first night sought his berth, relieving the sadness of his farewell to America with thoughts of what awaited him in Europe and Asia.

Life spread before him an alluring prospect, and nothing which he could ask to encourage and stimulate his aspirations seemed to be wanting. When he looked back, he could not fail to be grateful. Beginning the struggle under such depressing circumstances,—poor, friendless, uneducated,—he had won a handsome fortune, a national fame, a host of admiring friends, and no inconsiderable amount of cultivation and miscellaneous knowledge. And now, at twenty-eight, with two long years of freedom from all responsibility and care before him, blessed with superabundant health and strength and hope, he was on his way to the enchanted scenes of the Old World,—the famous cities, battle-fields, monuments, art-galleries, and pleasure-gardens,—of which he had read and dreamed so much. He was going with an earnest purpose to improve himself as well as to enjoy himself. This spirit, with a well-filled purse, and the fluent knowledge of the French language which he had acquired in New Orleans, were important conditions for the realization of his aim. And thus, with alternate recollections of those left behind, observations of the scenery and experiences of marine life, mapping out the series of places he meant to visit, and thinking over what he would do, the days wore by. He spread his cloak sometimes on the deck in the

very prow of the vessel, and lying on it upon his back, so that he could see nothing but the sky and clouds, continued there for hours, allowing the scene and the strong sensations it awoke to sink into his soul, feeling himself a little speck floating on a larger speck between two infinities. He said he often, years afterwards, associated the remembrance of this experience with speeches of Lear and Hamlet when representing those characters on the stage.

A fortnight of monotony and nausea, sprinkled with a few excitements, passed, and the transatlantic shore hove in view, as welcome a vision as his eyes had ever seen. Landing at Havre, he bade adieu to Captain Forbes and the good ship Sully, made his way at once to Paris, and, taking apartments, settled down to that delightful course of mingled recreation and study to which he had long been looking forward.

A voyage across the ocean and a two years' residence in Europe for a young American full of eager curiosity and ambition, cut loose from the routine and precedents of home and friends, cannot but constitute an epoch of extreme importance in his life. This must be true in its effects on the development of his personal character, detaching him and bringing out his manhood; and, if he is the votary of any liberal art, true also in its influence on his professional culture. In 1834 such an enterprise was a greater event than it is now. The number of American travellers in Europe was nothing like what it has grown to be since. Furthermore, the multiplication of books and descriptive letters, giving the most minute and vivid accounts of all that is most interesting in a journey or residence in the different countries then visited by Forrest, has been so great, that any prolonged presentation of his adventures and observations there would now seem so out of date and out of place as to be an impertinence. It will suffice for all the legitimate ends of a biography if a few characteristic specimens of what befell him and what he saw and did are furnished from his letters, his diary, and his subsequent conversation. These will indicate the spirit of the man at that time, and show something of the advantages, personal and professional, which he gained from the social and artistic sources of instruction opened to him while abroad. It will be seen that, however strong the attractions of pleasure were to him, he did

not neglect the opportunities for substantial profit, but, keeping his faculties alert to observe new phases of human nature and fresh varieties of social life, he was especially careful to drink in the beauties of natural scenery and to study the expressive possibilities of the human form, as illustrated in the works of the greatest artists of ancient and modern time.

The following letter was written shortly after his arrival in Paris:

"To say that I am pleased with what I have thus far seen of Paris would be a phrase of very inadequate meaning: I am surprised and delighted. I have been to the Louvre, the Tuileries, Place Vendôme, St. Cloud,—here, there, and everywhere,—and I have not yet seen a twentieth part of the objects which claim a stranger's attention. One cannot go into the streets for a moment, indeed, but something new attracts his curiosity; and it seems to me that my senses, which I have heretofore considered adequate to the usual purposes of life, ought now to be enlarged and quickened for the full enjoyment of the objects which surround me. I have, of course, visited some of the theatres, of which there are upwards of twenty now open. A number of the best actors, however, are absent from the city, fulfilling provincial engagements, and may not be expected back for a month or more. I went to the Théâtre Porte St. Martin the other night, to see Mademoiselle Georges, now, on the French stage, the queen of tragedy. I saw her perform the part of Lucrece Borgia, in Victor Hugo's drama of that name. Her personation was truly beautiful,—nay, that is too cold a word; it was grand, and even terrible! Though a woman more than fifty years old, never can I forget the dignity of her manner, the flexible and expressive character of her yet fine face, and the rich, full, stirring, and well-modulated tones of her voice. How different is her and nature's style from the sickly abortions of the present English school of acting, lately introduced upon the American stage!—the snake-like writhing and contortion of body, the rolling and straining of the eyeballs till they squint, the shuffling gait, and the whining monotone,—how different, I say, from all this is the natural and easy style of Mademoiselle Georges! In her you trace no servile imitations of a bad model; but you behold that sort of excellence which makes you forget you are in a theatre,—that

perfection of art by which art is wholly concealed,—the lofty and the thrilling, the subdued and the graceful, harmoniously mingling, the spirit being caught from living nature. I had been led to believe that, in France, the highest order of tragic excellence had died with Talma. It is not so. I consider Mademoiselle Georges the very incarnation of the tragic muse.

"The French, it must be allowed, understand and practise the art of living independently. They find you furnished apartments according to your own taste and means—comfortable, handsome, or gorgeous—in any part of the city or its environs. In your rooms you may either breakfast, dine, and sup, or take only your coffee there, and dine at a restaurant. This is to me, a bird of passage, and desirous of taking a bird's-eye view of things, a delightful mode of living. Paris is filled with restaurants and cafés of all sorts and sizes, where you may obtain your 'provant,' as Captain Dalgetty would style it, at what price you please, from the humble sum of a few sous up to the emptying of a well-lined purse. Ladies, gentlemen, and whole families may be seen at these places, enjoying their repast, and the utmost order and decorum prevail. Some of these cafés are magnificently furnished. I breakfasted in one yesterday the furniture and decorations of the salon of which cost eighty thousand francs. Another agreeable thing in Paris is, that you may one moment be in the midst of fashion, pomp, and all the hollowness of the flattering crowd, and the next buried in the sincere quiet of your own chamber, your very existence blotted from the memories of those with whom, the unsophisticated might have imagined, your society was of the utmost consequence. I say this is pleasant when properly understood and appreciated. All that is required of you is the superficial courtesy of life, which costs a well-bred man nothing; and in return you have a well-dissembled friendship, looking like truth, but which they would not have you to cherish as a reality for the world. The sentiments of the heart are quite too dull and too troublesome for their mercurial temperament; and hence you seldom hear of a Frenchman's having a false friend."

The professional bias which so strongly dominated among the associations in the mind of Forrest led him very early after his arrival in the French metropolis, to visit the tomb of Talma.

Carrying a fresh laurel crown under his cloak, he sought out the consecrated place among the crowd of undistinguished graves, reverently laid his tribute there, and lingered long in meditation on the career, the genius, the renown of the greatest stage-actor of France, and the lessons to be learned from his life and character by ambitious successors in his art. Thus, like Byron at the grave of Churchill, did the player draw his profitable homily from "the glory," though, unlike the morbid bard, he did not think of "the nothing, of a name."

One incident occurred in the experience of Forrest in Paris which has much significance on several accounts. He had formed a very pleasant acquaintance with the manager of one of the theatres. This manager had a protégé of whose nascent talent as an actor he cherished a high estimate. The youth was to make his début, and the manager asked the American tragedian to attend the performance and give his opinion of the promise it indicated. At the close of the play, asked to state his candid impression without reserve, Forrest said to the manager, "He will never rise beyond a respectable mediocrity. It is a perfectly hopeless case. There are no deeps of latent passion in him, no lava-reservoirs. His sensibility is quick, but all superficial. But that Jewish-looking girl, that little bag of bones with the marble face and flaming eyes,—there is demoniacal power in her. If she lives, and does not burn out too soon, she will become something wonderful." That little bag of bones was the then unknown Rachel!

The next selection presented from his correspondence was written to Leggett several months later, and soon after Jackson's recommendation of reprisals if the American claims on France were not paid:

"You see I still date from the gay metropolis of France. The fascinations of Paris have held me longer than I intended; but I mean to break from them by the first of next month, and cross into Italy. I have read the President's admirable message: it breathes a spirit worthy of himself, worthy of the occasion, worthy of my country. I refer particularly, of course, to his views relative to France. His energetic and manly sentiments have had the effect here of once more *Americanizing* Americans, and revived within them that love of country which the pageantry

and frivolity, the dreamy and debasing luxury of this metropolis serve materially to enervate. The Chamber of Deputies has not yet recovered from the shock occasioned by the unanticipated recommendations of the message. Opinion is divided as to the course which will be pursued; but from all I hear, and all I observe, I am strongly inclined to believe that when they have recovered from their bewilderment they will come to the conclusion that, in this instance at least, honesty is the best policy; and perhaps they may consider also that discretion is the better part of valor.

"By the way, I was presented to Louis Philippe on the third and last evening of the usual presentations. I was accompanied by Mr. ——, of Boston. We crossed over to the palace of the Tuileries (which is nearly opposite to our hotel) about nine o'clock in the evening, passed unquestioned by the numerous guards who throng the avenues of the great court-yard, and entered the vestibule of the palace, filled with an army of servants in rich liveries, standing in form, with all the stiffness of militia officers on drill. We next ascended to an elevated mosaic pavement, where we encountered two secretaries prepared to receive the names of visitors. On entering the palace, we ascended a grand staircase, the stone balustrade of which is beautifully ornamented with lyres and snakes, under suns,—the crests of Colbert and Louis XIV. On the first landing is the Salon of the Hundred Swiss, which has four Ionic columns, and is ornamented with four statues of Silence, two sitting and two erect. We next passed into the state apartments. The first is the Salon of the Marshals, occupying the whole of the centre pavilion, and having a graceful balcony on each side. The walls are hung with portraits of the marshals of France by the most eminent artists, and it also contains busts of several distinguished French generals. In the next room, which is called the Salon of the Nobles, we found a concourse of ladies and gentlemen, comprising the orders of nobility, and all richly and appropriately attired. This apartment is set off with gold, representing battles, marches, triumphs, surrounded with ornaments and allegorical figures. The Salon of Peace, which is the next room, contains also many costly decorations; but I had less opportunity to observe these, as the crowd became each moment denser and denser, and to make our way through it de-

manded all our attention. This human current at last débouched in the Salle du Trône, and, diffusing itself quickly around it, its waves subsided like those of an impetuous torrent when it pauses in the valley and spreads itself out, as if in homage, at the mountain's foot. I need not tell you of the beauty of the throne, the richness of its carved work, the profusion of gold ornaments with which it is sprinkled, the gorgeousness of the crimson canopy which overhangs it, or the pride-kindling trophies which are dispersed in picturesque clusters at its sides. These things, and numerous like accessories, your fancy will present to you with sufficient accuracy.

"The king had not yet entered, but was expected every moment; and the interval afforded me an opportunity of studying the brilliant scene. The effect at first was absolutely dazzling. The plumed and jewelled company constantly moving and intermingling, so that the light played in a thousand trembling and shifting beams, which flashed in arrowy showers not only at every motion, but almost every respiration, of the diamond-covered groups, and these groups multiplied to infinity by the reflections of magnificent mirrors surrounded by chandeliers that diffused excessive lustre through the room, presented a scene to me which, as I eagerly gazed on it, almost pained me with its surpassing splendor.

"In the anxious hush of expectation, the old ladies, as if in melancholy consciousness of the decay of their natural charms, busied themselves in arranging their diamonds to the most dazzling effect of brilliancy, while the young demoiselles threw hurried glances at each other, scrutinizing their relative pretensions in the way of decorations and personal beauty. The varieties of human character found time to display themselves even in the brief and anxious period of suspense while waiting for the entrance of royalty. Pride, envy, jealousy, ambition, coquetry, were all at work. Here an antique and embroidered dandy twisted his long and grizzly mustachios with an air of perfect satisfaction, whilst his bump of self-esteem seemed demanding immediate release from his tightened peruke. There an old Spanish general talked loudly of the wars, and 'fought his battles o'er again.' From a pair of melting eyes a fair one on one hand threw languishing glances on the favored youth at her side, while the ruby

lip of another curled with contempt as a lighter figure or a fairer face swept by.

"But a general movement of the crowd soon gave a new direction to my thoughts; and my eyes, from studying the various features of the splendid crowd, were now attracted to those of the king, who had just entered the apartment. For a moment all was bustle. The ladies arranged themselves along the sides of the spacious salon, and Louis Philippe, with his queen, the two princesses, and the two dukes, Orleans and Nemours, together with the officers and dames of honor, passed along the line, politely and familiarly conversing with the ladies. After satisfying our curiosity by gazing on the royal family, and having followed them to the Salon of Peace, we returned again to the Salle du Trône, where we took seats in front of the royal chair. Here I sat meditating on the gaudy and empty show for some time, when an officer suddenly entered and exclaimed, '*Messieurs, la Reine!*' and immediately the queen entered. I rose and bowed, which she graciously acknowledged, and passed into the apartment beyond, called the Hall of Council. The king, with the rest of the family, attended by the courtiers, followed the queen. The ladies had now all been presented, and most of them had retired. About a hundred gentlemen were assembled at the door of the Council-chamber, and myself and friend had scarcely joined the group when the doors opened, and one by one those before us passed in. A gentleman usher at the door demanded the names of those who passed, and announced them to the court. After hearing those of sundry marquises, counts, and others announced, it at last came to my turn. My name was audibly repeated, I entered, and made my début before the King of France with not half the trepidation I experienced on presenting myself for the first time before a *sovereign* in New York—I mean the sovereign people—on an occasion you will recollect. The king addressed a question to me in French, and after exchanging a few sentences I bade him farewell, bowed to the queen and others of the royal family, and withdrew.

"Our plain republicans often laugh at the mimic monarchs of the stage for their want of grace and dignity. A trip to court would satisfy them that real monarchs are not always overstocked with those qualities.

"I some time ago had the pleasure of an introduction to the celebrated Mademoiselle Mars. She received me very cordially, and through her polite offices the freedom of the Théâtre Français was presented to me. Of all the actresses I have ever seen, M'lle Mars stands first in comedy. In her you perceive the natural ease and grace which should characterize the most finished lady of the drawing-room; and her quiet yet effective style of acting is the most enchanting and delicate triumph of the mimic art. You cannot witness one of her performances without thinking that the genius of comedy belongs exclusively to the French stage. Do not suppose that my opinion is influenced by personal attentions: it was formed before I had had the pleasure of being presented to her. Though possessing a splendid fortune, she still exerts, fortunately for the lovers of the drama, her unrivalled talents in her laborious and difficult profession. She lives in a palace, and even her *salle du billard* is an apartment which would well serve for a corporation dinner.

"The great and almost the only topic of conversation in all circles just now is the President's message, the recall of the French minister, and the intimation to Mr. Livingston that his passports were at his service. Allow a little time for the effervescence of public feeling to subside, for the excitable temper of this mercurial nation to grow calm, and I think the propriety of paying our claims will be acknowledged.

"While I scribble this desultory letter to you, I am with you in fancy, and almost wish I were so in reality. I am tired of the glare and frivolities of Paris, and long to tread again

> 'The piled leaves of the West,—
> My own green forest land.'

"France is refined and polite; America is solid and sincere. France is the land for pleasure; America the land for happiness. Adieu. I shall go into Italy in a fortnight, from whence I will write you again."

The following letter, addressed to another friend, was written about three weeks after the foregoing one:

"I am about bidding adieu to Paris, having been detained here by its various fascinations much longer than I anticipated. I shall set out on Tuesday next, with three young Americans, to travel

by post through Italy, so as to be in Rome before the termination of the Carnival. I can at least claim the merit of not having been idle during my sojourn in Paris, and the time has passed both agreeably and profitably. Though the *dulce* has been the chief object of my search, the *utile* has been found with it, and has not been altogether neglected, neither, as a separate aim. New sources of various information have opened themselves to my mind at every turn in this great and gay and ever-changing metropolis; and whether I hereafter resume the buskin, or play a more real part in the drama of life, I think I shall find my gleanings here of service to me. I have mingled with all ranks of people, from the monarch who wears 'the golden round and top of sovereignty,' down to the lowest of his subjects,

> 'In smoky cribs,
> Upon uneasy pallets stretching them.'

"I have visited alike the perfumed chambers of the great and the poor abodes of the lowly, the institutions of science, literature, and the arts, the resorts of fashion, of folly, and of vice, and in all I have found something which not merely served to fill up the passing hour, but that furnished either substantial additions of knowledge or agreeable subjects of future meditation and discourse. Human nature, as modified by the different circumstances of life and fortune, presents an ample and diversified volume to her student in Paris: and in this bustling and glittering panorama, where everything seems most artificial, one who looks beneath the surface may learn much of the secret feelings, motives, passions, and genius of man.

"The President's message still continues to be the theme of much conversation. In the saloons of the theatres, in the cafés and restaurants, and on the public promenades I frequently hear the name of General Jackson uttered by tongues that never before were troubled to syllable it, and which do not pronounce it 'trippingly,' according to Hamlet's advice, but twist it into various grotesque sounds. Passing through Ste. Pélagie the other day (a prison for debtors), I overheard one of the inmates of that abode discussing with great vehemence the question of indemnity. He held a newspaper in his hand, and, as I passed, exclaimed, '*La France ne devrait pas payer les vingt-cinq millions!*' A fellow-

feeling, thought I, makes us wondrous kind. The anecdote of the porter, the soldier, and the debtor, in the 'Citizen of the World,' occurred to my mind.

"By the way, the prison of Ste. Pélagie is a curious establishment. It derives its name from an actress of the city of Antioch, who became a penitent in the fifth century. No other prison in Paris presents so diversified a picture, such a motley group of inmates, so singular an association of rank, country, profession, and age. Barons, marquises, and princes are among the cooped-up denizens of Ste. Pélagie. An Austrian prince, one of these, is shut up here to answer the claims of creditors to the amount of several millions. A café and restaurant are maintained within the prison; and one entering these, were he not reminded of his whereabouts by the gratings of the windows, might easily imagine himself in the Café des Trois Frères of the Palais Royal.

"I regret that I was not in America to welcome James Sheridan Knowles to our shores. I should have been glad to take the author of 'Virginius' and 'The Hunchback' by the hand,—ay, and by the heart too; for, from all I hear, any man might be proud of his friendship. But New York had this reception in her own hands, and it, no doubt, was such a one as 'gave him wonder great as his content.' I remember, very vividly, what sort of a reception she gave to a youth 'unknown to fame,' in whom you are kind enough to take an interest,—a youth whose highest ambition was only to strut his hour in those parts which the genius of Knowles has created. Can I, then, doubt that to the dramatist himself her greeting was most cordial?

"Adieu! I shall probably meet with Bryant in Rome; and, in conversing with him of past scenes and distant friends, shall almost feel myself, for a time, restored to their society."

The description of the first portion of his tour in Italy, in a long letter to Leggett, also seems worthy of preservation, and will have a various interest for the reader even now:

"I left Paris on the 11th instant on my projected ramble through Italy. It was not without regret that I at last quitted the gay and brilliant metropolis of France, which I had entered a total stranger but a few months before, but in which I had experienced the most grateful courtesies, and formed friendships with persons whose talents and worth have secured them an abiding place in

my esteem. As the towers of Notre Dame and the dome of the Pantheon faded from my sight, I sighed an adieu to the past, and turned with somewhat of apathy, if not reluctance, to the future.

"At this season of the year the country of France presents to the American traveller a cheerless appearance. Without forests to variegate the scene with their many-colored garniture, and with rarely even a hedge to define the boundaries of individual property, the country looks somewhat like a wide, uncultivated common or storm-beaten prairie; and in this state of 'naked, unfenced desolation,' even one of those unsightly and zigzag structures which in America mark the limits of contiguous farms would have been an agreeable interruption of the monotony. The neat farm-houses of America, with all their accessories bespeaking prosperity and thrift, are not met with here; but, instead, a bleak, untidy hovel obtrudes itself on your sight, or your eyes, turning from it, rest on a ruined tower or once proud château tumbling into decay.

"I reached Lyons at midnight on the 13th, and spent the following day in visiting the chief objects of interest in the city, among which were the Museum of Antiquities and the Cathedral. My curiosity led me to inspect the silk manufactories of this place; but the pleasure which I should have derived from witnessing the beautiful creations of the loom was wholly counteracted by the squalid and miserable appearance of the poor creatures by whom the glossy fabrics are made,—attenuated, sickly wretches, who waste their being in ineffectual toil, since the scanty pittance which they earn is not enough to sustain life. My thoughts reverted from these oppressed creatures to the slaves of America. The condition of the latter is one of luxury in comparison. Yet they are slaves,—how much is in a name!

"I crossed the Alps by Mont Cenis. The toil of this achievement is a different thing now from what it was in the time of Pompey, who has the honor of being set down as the first that made the passage. From his time till 1811 the journey must have had its difficulties, since it could only be performed on foot, or with a mule or donkey. Napoleon then came upon the scene, and—*presto, change*—in five months a carriage-road wound by an easy ascent from the base to the cloud-capped summit, and thence down into the sunny lap of Italy. Napoleon! wherever he passed

he has left traces of his greatness stamped in indelible characters. A thousand imperishable monuments attest the magnificence of his genius. Here, now, at all seasons, a practicable road traverses Mont Cenis, running six thousand feet above the level of the sea, and uniting the valley of the Arck in Savoy to that of Doria Ripuaria in Piedmont. What a bugbear the passage of the Alps is to the uninitiated! and all travellers seem disposed to encourage the deception. For my own part, the tales I had heard prepared me to anticipate an encounter with all sorts of difficulties, and that I should avoid them only by 'hair-breadth 'scapes.' When I first mentioned my intention of crossing Mont Cenis in the month of February, a laugh of incredulity was the only answer I received from certain 'holiday and silken fools.' And yet, when I came to test the nature of those perils which seemed so formidable viewed from Paris, judge my surprise at finding one of the best roads I was ever wheeled over, stealing up into mid-heaven by such a gentle ascent, that, were not one continually reminded of his whereabout by the roar of foaming waters, as they leap from fragment to fragment of the huge, dissevered rocks, and tumble into 'steep-down gulfs,' he might almost fancy himself gliding smoothly over one of those modern contrivances which have realized, in some measure, the wish of Nat Lee's hero, and 'annihilated time and space.'

"A Kentuckian once riding with me on the Albany and Troy turnpike, after an interval of silence, in which he was probably comparing that smooth road with the rough-hewn ways of his own State, suddenly broke out, 'Well, this road has the leetlest tilt from a level I ever did see!' The odd expression occurred to my mind more than once in crossing the Alps. It may do to talk of the terrors of the Alps to certain lap-nursed Europeans, who have never surmounted any but mole-hill difficulties; but to Americans—or such Americans, at least, as have seen something of their own magnificent country before hastening to examine the miniature features of Europe—the Alps have no terror in their threats. Land-Admiral Reeside or honest Joe Webster of Albany would enjoy a hearty laugh to see for himself what Alpine dangers are, and with one of his fast teams would contract to take you over the mountains in no time at any season of the year.

"I should possess a graphic pen, indeed, were I able to communicate to you, by the faint coloring of words, anything like an adequate idea of the lofty grandeur of the scene which was spread out beneath me as I paused on the summit of the mountain to cast back one more lingering look on France. The sun was just setting, and the slant rays lighted with dazzling lustre the snowy peaks around me, and bathed in a flood of light like molten gold the crags and flinty projections of the lightning-scathed and time-defying rocks. A dark cloud, like a funeral pall, overhung the valley; the mountain-torrent hoarsely brawled along its devious channel half choked with thick-ribbed ice; and a thousand features of rude magnificence filled me with admiration of the sublimity which marks this home of the tempest and avalanche. At the hotel where I supped, a number of the peasantry were making the most of the Carnival-time with music, masking, and dancing,—*and all this above the clouds!*

"Day was just breaking when we entered Turin. The hum and stir of busy life were just beginning, and the laborer, called from his pallet to resume his toil, jostled in the street the sons of revelry, returning jaded and worn out from the scenes of merriment. The traveller who would view the Carnival in its most attractive guise should not break in upon it with the pale light of morning, as what I saw on entering Turin fully satisfied me. The lamps were still burning in the streets, and the maskers wearily returning to their several homes. Poor Harlequin, with sprained ankle, limped tediously away. Columbine hung listlessly upon the arm of Pantaloon, whose chalky visage was without a smile, and whose thoughts, if he thought at all, were probably running much upon the same theme as honest Sancho's when he pronounced a blessing on the man who first invented sleep. These exhausted revellers, a weary sentinel here and there half dozing on his post, and a houseless beggar wandering on his unappointed course, were the sights that first drew my attention on entering the gates of Turin.

"The streets of Turin are spacious and clean, and cross each other at right angles. Their regularity and airiness were quite refreshing after being so long confined to the dungeon-like dimensions and gloom of the byways of a French town. But these spacious streets, like those of all other Italian cities, are overrun

with mendicants, and I have already had occasion to observe that where palaces most abound so also do beggars. The foundations of the lordly structures of aristocracy everywhere alike are laid on the rights of man, and the cement which holds them together is mixed with the tears of human misery.

"Going to the church of St. Philip this morning, I encountered an old man sitting on the pavement, supplicating for alms in heart-rending tones. He could not have been less than eighty years of age, and his long locks, of silvery whiteness, strayed thinly over his shrivelled neck. His eyes were out,—those pure messengers of thought no longer twinkled in their spheres,—but he still turned the orbless sockets to each passer, imploring charity in the name of Him whose crucified image he grasped in his attenuated fingers. I was touched by the spectacle, and as I approached to drop my dole into his hand, I noticed a brass plate hanging on his threadbare garment, the inscription on which denoted that this mendicant had been regularly examined by the police, and had taken out his license to beg! What a source this from which to derive public revenue! What a commentary on the nature of government in this oppressed country! What a contrast it suggested, in turning my thoughts to my own land, where government is the people's choice, the rulers their servants, and laws nothing more than recorded public opinion!

"On entering the church of St. Philip, I found before an altar blazing with lights and enveloped in clouds of incense a priest performing the impressive service of the Catholic Church. But the thing that struck me was the democratic spirit which seemed to govern the congregation in their public worship. I saw kneeling and mingling in prayer the sumptuously clad and the ragged, the clean and the unclean, the prince and the beggar. On the pavement at a little distance from me lay extended a strapping mendicant, reduced in point of clothing almost to the condition of Lear's 'unaccommodated man,' and groaning out his prayers in tones that sounded more like curses than supplications, while at his side, with graceful mien and placid brow, knelt a Sardinian sylph, looking more like an angel interceding for the prostrate wretch than a being of kindred nature asking mercy for herself.

"The museum of Turin is of great extent, and contains vast

apartments devoted to natural history, mineralogy, and other sciences. There are here, besides, some rare specimens of antique Greek and Egyptian sculpture. The finest collection of paintings is in the palace of the duchess, among them pictures by Vandyke, Rubens, Teniers, Murillo, and other 'approved good masters.' I was much struck with a full equestrian portrait of his present majesty Charles Albert, by Horace Vernet. Vernet is one of the very few whose horses *live* on the canvas. The one to which I now allude is not only exhibited in all his fair proportions, with muscles, thews, and sinews that seem swelling with life, but actual, not counterfeit, spirit shines in the sparkle of his eye and is seen in the breath of his distended nostrils.

"The Grand Opera House of Turin is very spacious, containing six rows of boxes, dimly lighted by a single small chandelier suspended over the centre of the pit. The rest of the lights are reserved for the stage, by which the scenic effects are greatly heightened; but I doubt if what is gained in that respect would reconcile an American audience to sit in a sort of twilight so dim as scarcely to allow one to know the complexion of the person sitting at his side. The performances were very ordinary, and presented nothing worth mentioning or remembering."

He rode into beautiful Genoa over that magnificent Corniche road whose left side is diversified with stretching fields and olive-orchards and soaring cliffs, whose right side the blue ocean fringes. The city has a charm to the imagination of an American from its connection with Columbus, and a charm to the eye from that lovely semicircle of mountains embracing it, and which so slope to the waves of the sea in front and blend with the clouds of the sky in the rear that it is often impossible for the gazer to tell where earth ends and heaven begins. It was Sunday when Forrest entered Genoa. Looking out into the glorious bay, he saw an American ship of war riding proudly at anchor, the beautiful banner of stars and stripes hanging at her peak, every mast and spar and rope mirrored in the glassy flood below. His breast thrilled at the sight. He hired a boatman to row him out. Clambering up the side, he asked permission of the commander to come on deck and to stand underneath the flag. It was granted, and, looking up at the silken folds floating between him and heaven, he breathed deeply in pride and joy. "The ship,"

he said, "was a fragment of my country floated away here, and in touching it I felt reunited to the whole again."

He made a long tarry in Florence, studying the treasures of art for which that city is so renowned. He became intimate with Horatio Greenough, for whose genius—hardly yet appreciated as it deserves—he felt the warmest admiration. "He favored me," writes Forrest, "with a sight of his yet unfinished model for the statue of Washington, which was ordered by our government. He has represented the Father of his Country in a sitting posture, his left hand grasping the sword intrusted to him by the people for the achievement of their liberties, and his right pointing upward, as if to express reliance on the God of battles and the justice of his cause. With what different emotions did I regard this statue from those created by the marble honors paid to the Cæsars of the olden time! How my heart warmed with patriotic ardor and my eyes moistened as I looked on the reverend image of the great sage and hero! As an American I felt allied to him,—as an American I felt, too, with a consciousness that diffused a warm and grateful flush upon my cheek, that I was an heir to that sacred legacy of freedom which he and his compatriots bequeathed to their country."

After visiting Rome, Naples, Venice, Verona, and other places of the greatest interest in Italy, Forrest proceeded to Spain, where he spent several delightful weeks. He made Seville his chief headquarters, remembering the old Spanish proverb he had often heard, "Who sees not Seville misses a marvel." One day, while riding on horseback in the suburbs,—it being in the harvest-season,—he passed a vineyard in which the peasants were at work. He saw one man standing with upturned breast and outstretched arms to receive a bunch of grapes which another man was cutting from a vine loaded with clusters so enormous that a single one must have weighed forty or fifty pounds. At this sight he reined in his horse, and his head sank on his bosom. The years rolled back, and he was a boy again. Once more it was a Sunday afternoon in summer, and through the open window of a house in Philadelphia the sunshine was streaming across the floor where a young lad, with a Bible in his hands, was laughing at the picture of two men carrying a bunch of the grapes of Eshcol slung on a pole between them. Again the

hand of the mother was on the shoulder of the boy, and her dark eyes fixed on his, and in his soul he heard, as distinctly as though spoken audibly to his outward ear, the words, "Edwin, never laugh at the fancied ignorance and absurdity of another, when perhaps the ignorance and absurdity are all your own." The tears ran down his cheeks as, starting up his horse, he said to himself, "Ah, mother, mother! dear good soul, how wise and kind you were! What a fool I was!"

From Spain Forrest returned for a flying visit to Paris, where he wrote the following letter to his mother, which may be taken as a specimen of the large number he sent to her during his absence:

"PARIS, July 3d, 1835.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,—Your letter of the 27th of May has this moment reached me. How happy has the perusal of it made me! You write that you have been sick, but that now you are well. How glad I am to hear that you are restored! It is the dearest wish of my heart that health and happiness may always be preserved to you,—to you and to my dear sisters. Your welfare makes existence doubly sweet to me. I bear a 'charmed life' so long as you live and smile. All that I am I owe to you. Your necessities prompted my ambition; your affection led me on to triumph,—the harvest is your own, and my choicest wish is that you may long live to enjoy it. I was in Naples the 9th of March last, the anniversary of my birthday, and you were not forgotten. I drank a cup of wine to you, and my heart grew proud while it acknowledged you the source of its creation.

"It gives me great pleasure to hear that James Sheridan Knowles called to see you, and I regret that your indisposition prevented you from seeing him. I am told he is a sincere and warm-hearted man; and when such estimable qualities are joined to the rare talents which he possesses, the individual who combines them is as 'one man picked out of ten thousand.'

"Mr. Wemyss, in sending to you the season-tickets (though you may never use them), has acted like himself, and I most gratefully acknowledge his politeness and courtesy. You say you are anxiously counting the months and days until my return. In two months more we shall have been parted for a year,—a whole

year. That is a long time in the calendar when hearts that love become the reckoners of the hours. But the day draws on when we are to meet again; and after the first moments of our happy greetings, when your blessing has confirmed my return, and the emotions of the first hours shall be subdued into the serene content that must surely follow, then will we regard our present separation as a short dream of the past, and wonder that we thought we were divided so long.

"I will forward to you by the ship which will carry this letter a small box containing the following articles, viz., a necklace made from the lava of Vesuvius, beautifully carved and set in gold, together with a pair of ear-rings, for sister Henrietta; a cameo of the three Graces and a pair of lava ear-rings for Eleanora; a cameo of the Apollo Belvedere and a pair of lava ear-rings for Caroline. The two cameos Caroline and Eleanora will have set in gold, to wear as breast-pins, and charge the expense thereof to my account.

"Give my best respects to Goodman, and say how much I thank him for his friendly attentions. I suppose Col. Wetherill is grubbing away at his farm: or has he got tired of green fields and running brooks? If you see him, say he is most gratefully remembered by me. I am glad John Wall occasionally calls upon you. I like him much. And now, to conclude, allow me to say to you, my dear mother, to be of good cheer, for my wanderings will soon be over, and I shall again be restored to you in unabated health and strength. And meanwhile, be assured that your son,

'Where'er he roams, whatever clime to see,
His *heart* untravelled fondly turns to thee.'

EDWIN FORREST."

His short stay in the principal cities of the German Confederation,—now so wondrously consolidated and transformed into the German Empire,—though highly edifying and satisfactory to him at the time, yields nothing which calls for present record, unless, perhaps, a passing entry in his diary at Dresden be worthy of citation. "Rose from a refreshing siesta and walked upon the fashionable Terrace. The evening was calm and beautiful. The flowers and shrubs profusely growing, the music of a fine band, the rush and patter of children's feet, with the rapture of their

voices in joyous sport, the eyes of their parents beaming on them with tranquillity and hope, made all around appear a paradise. My brow alone seemed clouded; it was, however, but for an instant, as a quick thought of home sprang through my brain, and busy memories of *her* who had once watched my infant steps stirred about my heart. Would that, unimpeded by space, I could waft all my fond wishes to her at this moment!"

An excursion in Switzerland yielded him intense enjoyment. His studies for the rôle of William Tell had made him familiar with this country, and he longed to verify and complete his mental impressions by the more concrete perceptions obtainable through the direct senses. To stand in the village of Altorf and on the field of Grütli, to row a boat on Lucerne and Unterwald, to scale the mountains and see the lammergeyer swoop and hear the avalanche fall, to pause among the torrents and precipices and cry aloud,

> "Ye crags and peaks, I'm with you once again;
> I call to you with all my voice; I hold
> To you the hands you first beheld, to show
> They still are free!"

must have given him no ordinary pleasure. At Chamouni he bought a copy of that magnificent hymn of nature composed in this valley by Coleridge during his visit here. Printed on a rough sheet, it was for sale at the inn. Forrest had never seen it before. He climbed some distance up the side of the great mountain. Reaching a grassy spot in full view of the principal features of the landscape, he thrust his alpenstock in the earth, hung his hat upon it, and, seating himself beside a beautiful cascade whose steady roar mingled with his voice, he read aloud that sublime poem whose solemn thoughts and gorgeous diction so well befit the theme they treat.

> "Hast thou a charm to stay the morning star
> In his steep course? So long he seems to pause
> On thy bald awful head, O sovran Blanc!
> The Arve and Arveiron at thy base
> Rave ceaselessly; but thou, most awful form,
> Risest from forth thy silent sea of pines
> How silently!"

Speaking of the incident long years afterward, he said he did not

think of it at the time as any sort of religious service, but that his emotions really made it as genuine a one as the recital of a liturgy in any pettier and less divine cathedral.

From Germany he took ship to England. The following extract from a letter home will give a glimpse of his experience in London, where it was written:

"I have been here about three weeks, and it gives me great pleasure to say that, from the abundant proofs I have had of *English hospitality*, it amply deserves that world-wide reputation which has rendered the phrase proverbial. Among men of letters, among the intelligent and worthy of the middling class of society, and among those of my own profession, I have found nothing but the warmest cordiality and kindness. So grateful, indeed, has been the welcome I have received, and so agreeably has my time passed, that it is with exceeding regret I am about to tear myself away. But, being desirous of seeing the north of Europe before I return to my native land, I must take advantage of the present season to travel into Russia, as I fear that the 'eager and nipping air' of the north at a later period would bite too shrewdly for me. To-night I set out with my friend Wikoff for Hamburg, and thence to St. Petersburg and Moscow.

"The present not being the season for theatricals in London, I have had but scanty opportunities of judging of the merits of the performers. I have seen Liston and Farren, however, both distinguished for their talents, and both deservedly admired. Yet I have seen nothing to alter the opinion which you know I have long entertained, that *Henry Placide* is the best actor on the stage in his own diversified range.

"I am very often solicited to perform during my sojourn abroad, but to all such requests my answer is invariably in the negative. I tell my friends here, as I told those at home before leaving, that my object in visiting Europe was not professional. Thanks to my countrymen! they have obviated the necessity of my going on such a tour.

"James Sheridan Knowles has come back, and I was at 'Old Drury' when he reappeared. His reception was very warm and hearty, and after the play (The Wife) he was called out, when he addressed the audience in a few words expressive of his thanks

for their cordial greeting, and took occasion to advert, in very glowing terms, evidently prompted by sincere feeling, to the kindness he had experienced in America. He termed our country 'the bright land beyond the seas,' and our country-people 'his brothers and sisters.' His acknowledgments of gratitude were received by a full house with acclamations."

During the passage of the steamer William Jolliffe from London to Hamburg, Forrest evidently found no little amusement in studying the peculiarities of his fellow-passengers. He writes thus, for example: "Almost always when travelling in a public conveyance, if you notice, you will observe some one who tries to attract attention by standing out *in relievo* from the rest. Actuated by such a low ambition was an overgrown, unwieldy, almost spherical lady, dubbed on the way-bill honorable, and said to be the wife of a member of Parliament. This *dame passée* strove to ape the manners of a girl of sixteen, and occasionally, in a fit of would-be-young-again, gave her huge frame a motion on the promenade-deck that looked for all the world like the wallowing of a great sea-turtle in shallow water. She was of Spanish descent, and seemed delighted to show off her mastery of this foreign tongue, to the astonishment of the wonder-wounded Dutchmen, who, attracted by her bright-red mantle trimmed with ermine, and amazed at her knowledge of the strange tongue, gazed upon her with a sort of stupid reverence."

At Hamburg he attended a performance of Schiller's "Don Carlos," in the great Stadt Theatre. "The building is very commodious, but badly lighted by a single lustre depending from the dome. The play began at half-past six and ended at eleven, and, as it seemed to me, was but indifferently well represented. During these four and a half hours the people paid the closest attention and showed no sign of uneasiness. How an American audience would have shuffled!"

In Hamburg Forrest had his first experience of a Russian bath. His own description of this is interesting, as the delight in baths of all kinds was a growing passion with him even to the very last.

"Having reduced myself to nudity, a signal was given from an adjoining apartment, like the theatrical noises which attend the splitting of the charmed rock in the 'Forty Thieves.' A door now

was opened upon the side, a blanket thrown over my shoulders, and I was told in German to go in. I obeyed. This was a small room, where the thermometer rose to about one hundred. Here the blanket was taken from my shoulders, and a door beyond opened, and in stalked a naked man, who motioned me to follow him. I did so. I passed the portal, and was immediately enveloped in steam and heat up at least to a hundred and ten of Fahrenheit. This chamber was of oval shape, and had on one side three or four shelves of wood, rising one above the other, on the first of which I was told to sit down. After striving to breathe here for five or six minutes, I was invited to sit upon the next, and after a certain time to the next, and so on until I reached the last, near the ceiling, where the heat must have been at least a hundred and twenty. By this time the perspiration became profuse, and poured off in torrents. The attendant now told me to descend to the third shelf; and then he commenced rubbing and whipping me with fragrant twigs. Then I was rubbed with soap, then told to stand in the centre of the floor, when in a moment I was deluged with a shower of cold water, which seemed to realize to me the refreshing thought of the poison-fevered monarch who wished his kingdom's rivers might flow through his burning bosom. My probation was now nearly over,—three-quarters of an hour at least in this steaming purgatory. I returned to the first apartment, where I was laid, almost exhausted, upon a couch, and covered with at least a dozen blankets. Again the perspiration broke out upon me, and a boy stood by to wipe the huge drops from my face and brow. One by one the blankets were removed, and I was rubbed dry with white towels. Then I dressed myself, paid for the bath, about a dollar, and something to the boys. As I walked into the street, the atmosphere never before seemed so pure. Every breath was like a delicious draught. At every step I felt returning strength, and in about a half an hour a bottle of hock and a dozen oysters made Richard wholly himself again."

At St. Petersburg Forrest found much to interest him, especially the tomb of Peter the Great, the numerous relics and specimens of his handiwork so carefully preserved, and the magnificent equestrian statue by Falconet, erected in his honor by Catherine. While crossing a bridge that spans the Neva, he one day observed

a covered boat gliding beneath, manned by half a dozen soldiers. On inquiry, he learned that the boat contained some Polish noblemen who had been condemned to slavery and chains for the crime of loving liberty and their country too well. He describes a visit to the Palace of the Hermitage, where there was a fine collection of paintings, among them one ascribed to Jules Romain,—a very curious representation of the creation of woman. "Adam is asleep, like a melodramatic hero just fallen into a reverie, with his head resting on his right hand, quite in an attitude. The Deity, as usual, is given as an infirm old man dressed in azure, and is pointing to the side of our primeval parent, out of which mother Eve seems to slide like a thief from his hiding-place!"

Moscow he found still more attractive and imposing, with its long, romantic story, and the sublime tragedy of its conflagration in the presence of the terror-struck army of Napoleon. A single extract from his diary will suffice:. "Went to the Kremlin. Passed the Holy Gate with my hat on, unconscious of the *sacred* precincts until a boor of a Russian grunted at my ear and with violent gestures motioned toward my head. It then struck me this must be the Holy Gate, through which none dare pass without being uncovered. But, as I did not like to be browbeaten into respect for their 'brazen images,' I passed on sans cérémonie and without molestation. I walked to the terrace which overlooks the gardens and the river, and looked down upon the magnificent city, with her gorgeous palaces, her innumerable cupolas and domes, dazzling amid the bright sunbeams with azure and gold. I stood by the ancient residence of the Tsars, the scene of so much history; and as I glanced over the immense assemblage of stately structures spread far and wide across the vast plain below, all beaming with as much freshness as if by the voice of magic they had just been called into existence, my eyes drank in more delight than they ever had before in looking upon a city, save only when in early life, after an absence of years from my native place, I revisited my home. The spectacle which Moscow presented was at the same time novel and sublime. Its varied architecture was at once Oriental, Gothic, and Classic, the delicate towering minarets of the East and the beauteous majesty of the Grecian blending with the

'tall Gothic pile
Whose ancient pillars rear their marble heads,
Bearing aloft the arched and ponderous roof,
Which by its own weight stands immovable.'

"At night, it being the anniversary of the coronation of the Emperor, the gardens about the Kremlin were magnificently illuminated, and crowded, perhaps, with two hundred thousand people. The walls and turrets of the Kremlin were filled with lamps wrought into the most grotesque shapes and festooned with innumerable lights. So were the trees, and in the dark and luxuriant foliage of the gardens they looked

'Like winged flowers or flying gems.'"

From Moscow Forrest journeyed to Odessa, and thence through the Crimea to Constantinople. Passing Balaklava and Inkerman and Sevastopol, with what emotions he would have gazed about him could he but have foreseen the terrific battles that were in twenty years' time to rage there between the stubborn Slavonic power on one side and the leagued array of France, England, and Turkey on the other! No such premonition visiting his mind, he plodded on through the weary wastes till he reached Aloupka, where the Count Woronzoff, General Nerisken, and the Prince Gallitzin were resident proprietors of estates and lived in sumptuous style. The Gallitzin family were intimate acquaintances of that remarkable Russian lady, Madame Swetchine, whose conversion from the Greek Church to the Roman, whose rare character and genius, great friendships and brilliant salon in Paris, have secured for her name such high and permanent celebrity.

Taking a horse and a guide, Forrest started out from Aloupka to explore one of the neighboring Tartar villages.

"The houses are small, and generally built," he writes, "of stone, with flat roofs made of logs covered with dirt and clay, smoothed so as to form a comfortable floor to dry tobacco or grain upon. I asked permission to enter one of the huts, which was immediately granted. I found the clay floor scrupulously clean, the fire-place nicely swept, and some woollen cloths spread upon raised surfaces on the sides of the room, which seemed to serve as beds. The woman had a silver belt about her, which, when I admired it, she took off and handed to me. I put it

around my waist. At this the children laughed. I gave them some money, and mounted my horse and rode to the village church,—or mosque, as they are Mohammedans. It was an old building of wood and stone, with a ruinous wooden tower by its side, from which they cry to prayers. I entered it. No one was there. There was a small wooden gallery at one end, to which they ascend by a ladder. It was a shabby and dismal place, and I hurried out of it back to the hotel."

On the following day, with his friend Wikoff, Forrest dined with the Count Woronzoff. "At five o'clock a cannon is fired as a signal to dress for dinner. In a half an hour a second gun is fired, and the guests are seated. Soon after the first gun we started for the castle. I saw there for the first time the Countess Sabanska. I paid my respects to her and retired to another part of the room, as she was talking with several gentlemen. She was very animated in her conversation, with particularly vivid gesticulation and expression of face. The Count's Tartar interpreter was playing billiards with one of the attendants. In a few minutes the Count and Countess entered, followed by a train of ladies and gentlemen. He introduced me to his lady, also to Madame Nerisken and the Princess Gallitzin and her daughter. I led Madame Nerisken to the table, and sat between her and the Countess Woronzoff, whom I found to be a most agreeable and interesting woman. Count Woronzoff sat opposite, with the Princess Gallitzin on one side and the Countess Sabanska on the other. The conversation, conducted in French, was anything but intellectual, as the growth of the prince's vines seemed the all-absorbing topic. The Countess Sabanska had now changed her whole manner from the extreme vivacity and gayety she first evinced, and had become silent and melancholy. Her thoughts seemed to be far away. How I should have liked to read the depths of her soul and know what was moving there! After dinner some of the ladies smoked cigarettes, and others played cards."

Constantinople opened to Forrest a fascinating glimpse of the civilization of the East, with its ancient races of men, its strange architecture and religious rites, its poetic costumes, its impressive manners, and that glamour of mystery over all which makes Oriental life seem to the Western traveller such a contrast to

everything he has been wonted to at home. He made the most of his time here in visiting the historic monuments and trying to penetrate the open secrets of Moslem habits and Turkish character; and he brought away with him, on his departure for Greece, a crowd of mental pictures which never lost their clearness or their interest. For the history of the city of Constantine has been most rich in romance; and the scene unveiled to the voyager who approaches it by daylight or by moonlight is a vision of enchantment,—a wilderness of mosques, domes, cupolas, solemn cypresses, and spouting fountains. On a beautiful day, when not a cloud was in the sky nor a ripple on the Bosphorus, Forrest was surveying the city and its environs from a boat in the midst of the bay, when he saw, slowly approaching, a sumptuous barge, with awnings of silk and gold, a banner with the crescent and inscriptions in Arabic floating above, and a group of turbaned guards, with scimitars in their hands, half surrounding a man reclined on a purple divan. "Who is that?" asked Forrest of the guide. "That is the Padishah," was the reply. Forrest, ignorant of this title of "the Shah of Shahs" for the Sultan of Turkey, understood the guide to say, Paddy Shaw! and, supposing it to be some rich Irishman who was cutting such a figure in the Golden Horn, was so struck by the absurdity that he laughed aloud. The measured strokes of the rowers, regular as a piece of solemn music, meanwhile had brought the imperial freight nearly alongside. The guards looked at the laughing tragedian as if they would have liked to chop his head off, or bowstring him and sink him in a sack. The Sultan looked slowly at the audacious American, without the slightest change of expression in his sad, dark, impassive face,—and the two striking figures, so unlike, were soon out of sight of each other forever!

Passing over the notes of his tour in Greece, as covering matters now hackneyed from the descriptions given by hundreds of more recent travellers and published in every kind of literary form, a single extract from a letter to his mother is perhaps worthy of citation:

"From Constantinople I went to Smyrna, and thence into Greece. Here I am now, at last, in the city of Athens, the glorious home not only of the Drama, but also of so much else that has passed into the life of mankind. Alas, how changed!

With all the power of imagination which I can conjure up, I am hardly able to convince myself that this was the once proud city of Pericles, Plato, Æschylus, Demosthenes, and the other men whose names have sounded so grand in the mouths of posterity. Looking on the tumbled temples and desolate walls, I have exclaimed with Byron,—

> 'Ancient of days! august Athena, where,
> Where are thy men of might? thy grand in soul?
> Gone,—glimmering through the dream of things that were.
> First in the race that led to Glory's goal,—
> They're sought in vain, and o'er each mouldering tower,
> Dim with the mist of years, gray flits the shade of power.'"

A personal adventure, also, that befell him at Athens, must not be omitted. One beautiful afternoon, he had been inspecting the Parthenon and what remained of its sculptured ornaments. Near where he stood, a heap of skulls lay on the ground, skulls of some of the victims of the last revolution, who had fallen in a battle of the Greeks and Turks. His attention was drawn to the phrenological developments of several of these skulls. Chancing at that moment to look down towards the temple of Theseus, he saw, only a short distance from him, a man glide from behind a column and walk away. The man was clad in the costume of an Albanian, one of the most picturesque costumes in the world, and looked as if he had freshly stepped out of a painting, —so beautiful was the combination of symmetry in his form, grace in his motion, and beauty in his dress. Perfectly fascinated, Forrest hastened forward and addressed the stranger in English, in French, in Spanish; but vain was every attempt to make himself understood. Just then Hill, the American missionary for many years at Athens, came along. Forrest accosted him with the inquiry, "Do you know who that man is yonder?" and, as much to his amazement as to his delight, received the answer, "Why, do you not know him? That is the son of Marco Bozzaris!" The lines of his friend Halleck,—

> "And she, the mother of thy boys,
> Will, by her pilgrim-circled hearth,
> Talk of thy doom without a sigh;
> For thou art Freedom's now, and Fame's;
> One of the few, the immortal names
> That were not born to die,"—

these lines, and his own parting scene with their author in New York harbor, flashed into his mind, and he felt as if this incident alone were enough to repay him for his whole journey.

On his return once more to Paris, in a letter to his friend Leggett he sketches in epitome the ground he has been over. An extract follows:

"Since I saw you, I have indeed been in strange lands, and seen strange sights. I have traversed the Baltic and the wide dominions of the ambitious Autocrat,—crossed the Euxine and dipped into Asia and European Turkey,—'kept due onwards to the Propontic and Hellespont,'—wandered amid the faultless fragments of the 'bright clime of battle and of song,'—sailed by the Ionian Isles,—visited the chief towns of the Germanic Confederation,—and here I am at last, safe and sound, in the ever-gay capital of France. I thank Heaven my travelling in the 'far East' is at an end. One is badly accommodated there in railroads and steamers. However, take it for all in all, I have every reason to be satisfied with the voyage, for there is no kind of information but must be purchased with some painstaking, and one day I shall fully enjoy all this in calm retrospection from the bosom of the unpruned woods of my own country. Yes, the sight of the city of Moscow alone would amply repay one for all risks and fatigues at sea. Never shall I forget my sensations when, from the great tower of the Kremlin, one bright, sunny day, I looked down upon that beautiful city. The numberless domes, beaming with azure and with gold, the checkered roofs, the terraces, the garden slopes, the mingling of all the styles and systems of architectural construction, now massive and heavy, now brilliant and light, and everywhere fresh and original, enchanted me. I am free to confess Russia astonished me. I have sailed down the mighty Mississippi,—I have been in the dark and silent bosom of our own forest homes,—I have been under the eye of Mont Blanc and Olympus,—I grew familiar with Rome and with London,—without experiencing the same degree of wonder which fastened upon me in Russia. I thought there to have encountered with hordes of semi-barbarians, yet I found a people raised, as it were, at once from a state of nature to our level of civilization. Nor have they apparently, in their rapid onward course, neglected the *means* to render their progress sure. And then,

what an army,—a million of men! and the best forms of men,—the best disciplined, and able to endure the 'labored battle sweat' by their constant activity, the rigor of their climate, and their ignorance of all pleasures which serve to effeminate. The navy, too, though in an imperfect state compared with the army (in sailors, not ships), will doubtless soon hold a distinguished rank. Only think of such a power, increasing every day,—stretching out wider and wider, and all confessing one duty,—obedience to the will of the absolute sovereign!"

About this time two significant entries are found in his diary. The first one is: "Received intelligence of the death of Edwin Forrest Goodman, the infant son of a friend.

'All his innocent thouphts
Like rose-leaves scattered.'"

The second is this: "And so Jane Placide is dead. The theatrical people of New Orleans then have lost much. She imparted a grace and a force and dignity to her rôle which few actresses have been able so admirably to combine. She excelled in a profession in the arduous sphere of which even to succeed requires uncommon gifts, both mental and physical. Her disposition was as lovely as her person. Heaven lodge and rest her fair soul!"

The reader will recollect Miss Placide as the friend about whom young Forrest quarrelled with Caldwell and withdrew from his service. How strangely the millions of influences or spirits that weave our fate fly to and fro with the threads of the weft and woof! While he was writing the above words in the capital of France, her remains were sleeping in a quiet cemetery of the far South, on the other side of the world, with the inscription on the slab above her,—

"There's not an hour
Of day or dreamy night but I am with thee;
There's not a wind but whispers o'er thy name,
And not a flower that sleeps beneath the moon
But in its hues of fragrance tells a tale
Of thee."

He passed over to England again, to visit a few spots sacred in his imagination which he had not seen in his former journey there. Chief among these were the house and grave of Shakspeare, at Stratford-upon-Avon. With the eagerness and devotion arising

from the lifelong enthusiasm of all his professional studies and experience, reinforced by the feeling of the accumulated homage paid at that shrine by mankind at large, he wandered and mused in the places once so familiar with the living presence of the poet, and still seeming to be suffused with his invisible presence. In the day he had made a careful exploration of the church where the unapproachable dramatist lies sepulchred. Late in the evening, when the moon was riding half-way up the heaven, he clambered over the fence, and, while the gentle current of Avon was lapping the sedges on its shore almost at his feet, gazed in at the window and saw the moonbeams silvering the bust of the dead master on the wall, and the carved letters of the quaint and dread inscription on his tomb,—

> "Good friend, for Jesus' sake forbear
> To dig the dust encloséd here.
> Blessed be he who spares these stones,
> And cursed be he who moves my bones."

What a contrast the picture of him in this night-scene at the church-window would have made for those familiar with his appearance on the stage in the wrath of Coriolanus, the remorse of Macbeth, the sneer of Richard, the horror of Othello, or the tempest of Lear!

It now lacked but a few days of being two years since Forrest left America, and he began to feel powerfully drawn homewards. It had been a period of unalloyed satisfaction, and he had much improved in many ways, from his intercourse with different forms and classes of society, from his contemplation of natural scenery in many lands, from his study of the masterpieces of art, from his criticism of the performances of the distinguished actors and actresses whom he saw, and from his reading of many valuable books, including, among lighter volumes, such works as those of Locke and Spinoza. In this long tour and deliberate tarry abroad, wisely chosen in his early manhood, before his nature had hardened in routine, with plenty of money, leisure, health, freedom, and aspiration, he had drunk his fill of joy. His brain and spine and ganglia saturated with an amorous drench of elemental force, drunk with every kind of potency, he swayed on his centres in revelling fulness of life. He had been in these two exempted years like Hercules in Olympus, with abundance of ambrosia

and nectar and Hebe on his knee. But now his heart cried out for home, and the sense of duty urged him to gird up his loins for work again. Something of his feeling may be guessed from the fact that he had copied into his journal these lines of Byron:

> "What singular emotions fill
> Their bosoms who have been induced to roam,
> With fluttering doubts if all be well or ill,
> With love for many and with fears for some;
> All feelings which o'erleap the years long lost,
> And bring our hearts back to the starting-post."

He took passage in the Poland, and, with no notable adventure on the voyage, arrived at New York on the 5th of August, 1836, to be received with cheers into the open arms of a crowd of his friends as he stepped ashore, prouder than ever of his birthright of American citizenship.

CHAPTER XI.

PROFESSIONAL TOUR IN GREAT BRITAIN.

Two weeks of rest in his Philadelphia home, in delightful reunion with his mother and sisters, and two weeks more devoted to the banquets and parties with which his rejoicing friends there and in New York celebrated his return, passed quickly. He had now to prepare to say good-bye again. For overtures of such a flattering character had been made to him while in England to return and give a series of performances in the principal British theatres, that he had accepted them, and was engaged to be there early in October. The desire, however, after his long absence, to see him on the stage was so general, and was urged so eagerly, that he determined to appear for a few nights. Accordingly, he played the parts of Damon, Othello, and Spartacus for five nights in the Chestnut Street Theatre, in Philadelphia, and the same parts, with the addition of Lear, in the Park Theatre, in New York. The crowd and the excitement on the opening night were almost unprecedented, all the passages to the house being blocked with applicants two hours before the rising of the curtain. At the first glimpse of the actor in his stately senatorial garb, the multitude that filled the entire auditorium with a packed mass of faces rose as by one impulse and hailed him with deafening applause, kept up until it seemed as if it was not to end. He had never played better, by general consent, than he did this night. And when the play closed, and the enthusiastic ovation which had saluted his entrance was repeated, he certainly had every reason to feel in truth what he expressed in words:

"Ladies and gentlemen, for this warm peal of hands and hearts I have only strength in my present exhausted state to say, I thank you. It convinces me that neither time nor distance has been able to alienate from me your kind regards. I am unable

to speak what I wish; but I can sincerely say that you make me proud this evening. And the remembrance of the cordial greeting, after no common absence, given me here in this city of my birth and my affection, will go down with me to my latest hour as one of the happiest scenes of my professional life."

A similar reception, only, if possible, still more flattering in the vastness of the throng and the fervor of the tributes, awaited him in New York. Box tickets were sold at auction for twenty-five dollars each,—a fact to which there had not at that time been anything like a parallel known in this country. For his six performances he received three thousand dollars, and the profit of the manager was estimated at six thousand dollars. The public greeted his strong points with a warmth which seemed to show that their admiration had grown during his absence, and the critics spoke of an evident improvement in his acting,—that it was less boisterous and more thoughtful than formerly. Called out at the conclusion of the play, Othello, on the occasion of his farewell, he alluded with deep emotions to the night, some ten years before, when he had made his first appearance before a New York audience. Then, a mere youth, just emerging from severe hardships, and still oppressed by poverty and a dark prospect, with scarcely a friend, he had tremblingly ventured to enact the part of Othello for the benefit of a distressed brother-actor. The generous approbation then given him had lent a new zeal to his ambition and a new strength to his motives. From that hour his course had been one of unbroken prosperity, for which he desired to return his most heartfelt thanks to his countrymen, and to assure them that he would do his best not to dishonor them in the mother-country, to which he was then bound. "I shall carry with me," he added, "an indelible remembrance of your kindness; and I hope that the recollection will be mutual, so that I may say, with the divine Shakspeare,—

> 'Our separation so abides and flies
> That you, remaining here, yet go with me,
> And I, hence fleeting, still remain with you.'"

The audience responded to his speech with tempestuous huzzas, and he withdrew, carrying this flattering scene fresh in his memory as he set sail for his courageous enterprise on the other side of the sea.

It was a courageous and somewhat ominous adventure. For it is to be remembered that the relationships of England and the United States were very different in 1836 from what they are in our day. The memories of the Revolutionary war and of the war of 1812 were still keen and bitter; and the feelings of intellectual inferiority and literary vassalage to the mother-country among the Americans engendered a sense of wounded pride or irritable jealousy excessively sensitive to British criticism, which, on the other hand, was generally marked by a tone of complacent arrogance or condescending patronage. No American actor, at least none of any note, had yet appeared on the boards in England. All such international favors were on the other side,—and they had been most numerous and long-continued. The illustrious Cooper, an Englishman by birth and education, though so long domesticated in this country both as citizen and actor as to be almost considered an American, had been ignominiously hooted down on the most famous stage in London amidst opprobrious cries of "Away with the Yankee! Send him back!" What reception now would be vouchsafed to an American tragedian, fresh from nature and the woods of the West, and all untrained in the methods of the schools, who should dare essay to rival the glorious traditions of old Drury Lane within her own walls?—this was a question which caused many wise heads to shake with misgivings, and might well have deterred any less fearless spirit than that of Forrest from putting it to the test. But he believed, obvious as the antipathies and jealousies between the two countries were, that the fellow-feeling and the love of fair play were far stronger. In a speech delivered in his native city the evening before his departure, he expressed himself thus:

"The engagement which I am about to fulfil in London was not of my seeking. While I was in England I was repeatedly importuned with solicitations, and the most liberal offers were made to me. I finally consented, not for my own sake, for my ambition is satisfied with the applauses of my own countrymen, but partly in compliance with the wishes of a number of American friends, and partly to solve a doubt which is entertained by many of our citizens, whether Englishmen would receive an American actor with the same favor which is here extended to them. This doubt, so far as I have had an opportunity of

judging, is, I think, without foundation. During my residence in England, I found among the English people the most unbounded hospitality, and the warmest affection for my beloved country and her institutions. With this impression, I have resolved to present to them an American tragedy, supported by the humble efforts of the individual who stands before you. If I fail—I fail. But, whatever may be the result, the approbation of that public which first stamped the native dramatist and actor will ever be my proudest recollection."

Of all the friends to whom Forrest bade adieu, not one beside was so dear to him as Leggett. The heart-ties between them had been multiplied, enriched, and tightened by unwearied mutual acts of kindness and service, and a thousand congenial interchanges of soul in intimate hours when the world was shut out and their bosoms were opened to each other without disguise or reserve. The letter here added speaks for itself:

"OFFICE OF THE EVENING POST,
"NEW YORK, Sept. 19th, 1836.

"DEAR MADAM,—I had the pleasure of accompanying your son Edwin yesterday as far as Sandy Hook, and seeing him safely on his way for Liverpool, with a fine breeze, in a fine ship, and with a fine set of fellow-passengers. He was accompanied down the bay by a large number of his friends, who, on the steamboat parting from the ship, expressed their warm feelings for him in many rounds of loud and hearty cheers. We kept in sight of the vessel till near sundown, by which time she had made a good offing. Andrew Allen had gone on board with his baggage the day previous, and everything was prepared for him in the most comfortable manner. While we were on board the vessel with him, we were invited by the captain to sit down to a collation prepared for the occasion, and had the satisfaction of drinking to his health and prosperous voyage, not only across the Atlantic Ocean, but across the ocean of life also, in a glass of sparkling champagne. It would have given me the most unbounded happiness to have been able to accompany him to Europe, as he desired; but circumstances rendered it impossible for me to gratify that wish. I am with him in *heart*, however, and shall look most eagerly for the tidings of his safe arrival and triumphant reception.

Whatever news I get concerning him which I think may be of interest to you, I shall take pleasure in immediately communicating. Mrs. Leggett bade me remember her most affectionately to you and your daughters, and to say that, should you visit New York at any time during your son's absence, she shall expect you to make her house your home. In this wish I most fully concur. Allow me to assure you, madam, that

"With great respect,

"I am your obed't serv't,

"WM. LEGGETT.

"MRS. REBECCA FORREST."

James K. Paulding, a close and dear friend of Forrest, met him one sunshiny day in New York at the corner of Nassau and Ann Streets, and expostulated with him against going across the sea to play. "Washington," he said, "never went to Europe to gain an immortality. Jackson never went there to extend his fame. Many others of our greatest and most original men never visited the other hemisphere to add lustre to their names. And why should you? Stay here, and build yourself an enduring place in the mind of your own country alone. That is enough for any man!" He spoke with extreme eloquence, heedless of the busy throng who hurried by absorbed in so different a world from that whose prospects kindled the idealistic and ambitious friends. When Forrest was sailing out of the harbor, he recalled these words with strong emotion, and felt for a moment as if he were guilty of a sort of treachery to his own land in thus leaving it. Though the whole incident, as here set down, may appear overstrained, it is a true glimpse of life.

Forrest made his first professional appearance in England in Drury Lane Theatre, on the evening of the 17th of October, 1836, in the rôle of Spartacus, before an audience which crowded the house in every part to its utmost capacity. His great American fame had preceded him, and there was an intense curiosity felt as to the result of his experiment. The solicitude was especially keen among the two or three hundred of his countrymen who were present, and who knew the extreme democratic quality of the play of the Gladiator. The tremendous bursts of applause which his entrance called out soon put an end to all doubt or

anxiety. The favor in advance certified by the unanimous and long-continued cheers he confirmed at every step of the performance, and wrought to an extraordinary pitch at the close, when he was recalled before the curtain and greeted with overwhelming plaudits. He returned his thanks for the honor done him, and was loudly applauded when he said he was sure that England and America were joined by the closest good-will, and that the more enlightened portion of their population were superior to any feeling of national jealousy. But on attempting to include the author of the Gladiator in the approving verdict which the audience had given himself, he was interrupted by numerous protests and repeated cries, "Let us see you in some of Shakspeare's characters!"

The Courier of the next morning said,—

"America has at length vindicated her capability of producing a native dramatist of the highest order, whose claims should be unequivocally acknowledged by the Mother Country; and has rendered back some portion of the dramatic debt so long due to us in return for the Cookes, the Keans, the Macreadys, the Knowleses, and the Kembles, whom she has, through a long series of years, seduced, at various times, to her shores,—the so long doubted problem being happily solved by Mr. Edwin Forrest, the American tragedian, who made his first appearance last night on these boards, with a success as triumphant as could have been desired by his most enthusiastic admirers on the other side of the Atlantic. Of the numerous striking situations and touching passages in the play, Mr. Forrest availed himself with great tact, discrimination, and effect; now astounding all eyes and ears by the overwhelming energy of his physical powers, and now subduing all hearts by the pathos of his voice, manner, and expression. The whole weight of the piece rests upon him alone, and nobly does he sustain it. His action is easy, graceful, and varied; and his declamation is perfectly free from the usual stage chant, catchings, and points. Indeed, nature alone seems to have been his only model."

The "Sun" of the same date said,—

"Mr. Edwin Forrest, who has long held the first rank as a tragic actor in America, made his first appearance here last night in a new drama, also of American growth, entitled the *Gladiator.*

The acting of Mr. Forrest as Spartacus was throughout admirable. His very figure and voice were in his favor, the one being strongly muscular, the other replete with a rough music befitting one who in his youth has dwelt, a free barbarian, among the mountains. He electrified his audience; indeed, we have not heard more enthusiastic bursts of applause shake the walls of an English theatre since *Othello* expired with poor Kean. The great recommendations of Mr. Forrest as a tragedian we take to be strong passion, and equally strong judgment. In the whirlwind of his emotions he never loses sight of self-control. He is the master, not the slave, of his feelings. He appeals to no fastidious coterie for applause; he is not remarkable for the delivery of this or that pretty tinkling poetic passage; still less is he burdened with refined sensibility, which none but the select few can understand; far otherwise; he gives free play to those rough natural passions which are intelligible all the world over. His pathos is equally sincere and unsophisticated. His delivery of the passage,—

'And one day hence,
My darling boy, too, may be fatherless,'—

was marked by the truest and tenderest sensibility. Equally successful was he in that pleasing pastoral idea,—

'And Peace was tinkling in the shepherd's bells,
And singing with the reapers;'

which, had it been written in Claude's days, that great painter would undoubtedly have made the subject of one of his best landscapes.

'Famine shrieked in the empty corn-fields,'—

a striking image, which immediately follows the preceding one, was given by Mr. Forrest with an energy amounting almost to the sublime. Not less impressive was his delivery of

'There are no Gods in heaven,'

which bursts from him when he hears of the murder of his wife and child by the Roman cohorts. Mr. Forrest has made such a hit as has not been made since the memorable 1814, when Edmund Kean burst on England in Shylock. America may well feel proud of him; for though he is not, strictly speaking, what is called a classical actor, yet he has all the energy, all the in-

domitable love of freedom that characterizes the transatlantic world. We say this because there were many republican allusions in the play where the man spoke out quite as much as the actor, if not more. Having seen him in Spartacus, we no longer wonder at his having electrified the New World. A man better fitted by nature and art to sustain such a character, and a character better fitted to turn the heads of a nation which was the other day in arms against England, never appeared on the boards of a theatre. At the fall of the curtain he received such a tempest of approbation as we have not witnessed for years."

The Morning Advertiser said,—

"When to the facts of a new play and a new actor is superadded the circumstance that both the author and the player of the new tragedy are Americans, and the first who ever tempted the intellectual taste of the British public by a representation on the English stage, the crowds which last night surrounded the doors long before they were thrown open are easily accounted for. The applause which Mr. Forrest received on his *entrée* must have been very cheering to that gentleman. He possesses a countenance well marked and classical; his figure, a model for stage effect, with 'thew and sinew' to boot. His enunciation, which we had anticipated to be characterized by some degree of that *patois* which distinguishes most Americans, even the best educated, was almost perfect 'to the last recorded syllable,' and fell like music on the ears. We here especially point to the less declamatory passages of the drama; in those portions of it where he threw his whole power of body and soul into the whirlwind, as it were, of his fury, his display of physical strength was prodigious, without 'o'erstepping the modesty of nature.' The inflections of his voice frequently reminded one of Kean in his healthiest days, yet there did not appear the manner of a copyist. He was crowned with loud and unanimous plaudits at least a dozen times during the representation."

The Court Journal gave its judgment thus:

"This chief of American performers is most liberally endowed by nature with all the finest qualities for an actor. With a most graceful and symmetrical person, of more than the ordinary stature, he has a face capable of the sternest as of the nicest delineations of passion, and a voice of deep and earnest power. We

have never witnessed a presence more noble and commanding,—one that, at the first moment, challenged greater respect, we may write, admiration. As an actor, Mr. Forrest is fervent, passionate, and active: there is no child's play in whatever he does; but in the most serious, as in the slightest development of feeling, he puts his whole heart into the matter, and carries us away with him in either the subtlety or the strength of his emotion. With powers evidently enabling him to outroar a whirlwind, he is never extravagant,—he is never of 'Ercles' vein;' his passion is always from the heart, and never from the lungs. His last two scenes were splendidly acted, from the strength, the self-abandonment of the performer; he looked and moved as if he could have cut down a whole cohort, and died like a Hercules. The reception of Mr. Forrest was most cordial; and the applause bestowed upon him throughout the play unbounded. At the conclusion of the tragedy he was called for, and most rapturously greeted."

The Times described the figure, face, and voice of the actor, gave a long abstract of the play, and said,—

"He played with his whole heart, and seemed to be so strongly imbued with the part that every tone and gesture were perfectly natural, and full of that fire and spirit which, engendered by true feeling, carry an audience along with the performer. He made a powerful impression on the audience, and must be regarded as an able performer who to very considerable skill in his profession adds the attraction of a somewhat novel and much more spirited style of playing than any other tragic actor now on our stage."

The following extract is from the Atlas:

"If we were to estimate Mr. Forrest's merits by his performance of the Gladiator, we should, probably, underrate, or, perhaps, mistake the true character of his genius. The very qualities which render him supreme in such a part would, if he possessed no other requisites, unfit him for those loftier conceptions that constitute the highest efforts of the stage. It would be impossible to produce a more powerful performance, or one in all respects more just and complete, than his representation of the moody savage Thracian. But nature has given him peculiar advantages which harmonize with the demands of the part, and which, in almost any other character in the range of tragedy, would either encumber the delineation or be of no avail. His figure is cast

in the proportions of the Farnese Hercules. The development of the muscles, indeed, rather exceeds the ideal of strength, and, in its excess, the beauty of symmetrical power is in some degree sacrificed. His head and neck are perfect models of grandeur in the order to which they belong. His features are boldly marked, full of energy and expression, and, although not capable of much variety, they possess a remarkable tone of *mental* vigor. His voice is rich and deep, and susceptible of extraordinary transitions, which he employs somewhat too frequently as the transitions of feeling pass over his spirit. The best way, perhaps, of describing its varieties is to say that it reminded us occasionally of Kean, Vandenhoff, and Wallack, but not as they would be recalled by one who, in the dearth of his own resources, imitated them for convenience, but by one in whom such resemblances are natural and unpremeditated. Mr. Forrest's action is bold, unconscious, and diversified; and the predominant sentiment it inspires is that of athletic grace. In the part of Spartacus all these characteristics were brought out in the most favorable points of view; and the performance, exhausting from its length and its internal force, was sustained to the close with undiminished power. There is certainly no actor on the English stage who could have played it with a tithe of Mr. Forrest's ability."

In response to the invitation or challenge to appear in some of the great Shakspearean rôles, Forrest appeared many nights successively in Othello, Macbeth, and Lear, and in them all was crowned with most decisive and flattering triumphs. The praise of him by the press was generous, and its chorus scarcely broken by the few dissenting voices, whose tone plainly betrayed an animus of personal hostility. A few examples of the newspaper notices may fitly be cited,—enough to give a fair idea of the general impression he made.

The Globe, of October 25th:

"Mr. Forrest selected as his second character the fiery Othello, 'who loved not wisely, but too well.' There was something nobly daring in this flight, so soon, too, after he whose voice still dwells in our ears had passed from among us. To essay before an English audience any character in which Edmund Kean was remembered was itself no trifling indication of that self-confidence which, when necessary, true genius can manifest. To make

that attempt in Othello was indeed daring. And nobly, we feel proud to say, did the performance bear out the promise. In the Senate scene his colloquial voice told well in the celebrated address to the Seniors of Venice. He did not speak as if the future evils of his life had even then cast their shadows upon him. The calm equability of the triumphant general and successful lover pervaded his performance throughout the first two acts, with the exception of the scene of the drunken brawl in the second, where he first gave token of the fiery elements within him. The third act was a splendid presentment throughout. He had evidently studied the character with the judgment of a scholar, 'and a ripe and good one:' each shade of the jealous character of the easy Moor, from the first faint guessings at his tempter's meaning to the full conviction of his wife's dishonesty, was brought out with the touch of a master-hand, and embodied with a skill equalling that of any actor whom we have seen, and far, very far superior to the manner in which any other of our living performers could attempt it. This third act alone would have placed Mr. Forrest in the foremost rank of his profession had he never done anything else; and so his kindling audience seemed to feel, as much in the deep watching silence of their attention as in the tremendous plaudits which hailed what on the stage are technically called 'the points' he made.

"In the two succeeding acts he was equally great in the passages which called forth the burning passions of his fiery soul; but we shall not at present particularize; where all was good it would be difficult, and we have already nearly run through the dictionary of panegyric. In accordance with a burst of applause such as seldom follows the fall of the curtain, *Othello* was announced for repetition on Wednesday and Friday."

The commendation of the London Sun was still stronger:

"Mr. Forrest last night made his appearance here in the arduous character of Othello. The experiment was a bold one, but was completely successful. We entertain a vivid recollection of Kean in this part; we saw his Moor when the great actor was in the meridian vigor of his powers, and also when he was in his decline and could do justice only to the more subdued and pathetic parts of the character; and even with these recollections on our mind, we feel ourselves justified in saying that Mr. For-

rest's Othello, if here and there inferior in execution to Kean's, was in conception far superior. There is an elevation of thought and sentiment,—a poetic grandeur,—a picturesqueness, if we may use such an expression, in Mr. Forrest's notion of the character, which Kean could never reach. The one could give electrical effect to all its more obvious points, turn to admirable account all that lay on its surface; the other sounds its depths,—turns it inside out,—apprehends it in a learned and imaginative spirit, and shows us not merely the fiery, generous warrior, the creature of impulse, but the high-toned, chivalrous Moor; lofty and dignified in his bearing, and intellectual in his nature,—such a Moor, in short, as we read of in the old Spanish chronicles of Granada,—and who perpetrates an act of murder not so much from the headstrong, animal promptings of revenge, as from an idea that he is offering up a solemn and inevitable sacrifice to justice. In the earlier portion of the character Mr. Forrest was rather too drawling and measured in his delivery; his address to the Senators was judicious, but not quite familiar enough; it should have been more colloquial. It was evident, however, that throughout this scene the actor was laboring under constraint; he had yet to establish himself with his audience, and was afraid of committing himself prematurely. Henceforth he may dismiss this apprehension; for he has proved that he is, beyond all question, the first tragedian of the age. . . . We have spoken of this gentleman's Othello in high terms of praise, but have not commended it beyond its deserts. In manly and unaffected vigor; in terrific force of passion, where such a display is requisite; but, above all, in heartfelt tenderness, it is fully equal to Kean's Othello; in sustained dignity, and in the absence of all stage-trick and undue gesticulation, it is superior. Perhaps here and there it was a little too elaborate; but this is a trivial blemish, which practice will soon remedy. On the whole, Mr. Forrest is the most promising tragedian that has appeared in our days. He has, evidently, rare intellectual endowments; a noble and commanding presence; a countenance full of varying expression; a voice mellow, flexible, and in its undertones exquisitely tender, and a discretion that never fails him. If any one can revive the half-extinct taste for the drama, he is the man."

The Carlton Chronicle said,—

"It is impossible that any actor could, in person, bearing, action, and utterance, better fulfil your fair-ideal of the noble Moor. All the passages of the part evincing Will and Power are delivered after a manner to leave the satisfied listener no faculty except that of admiration. His bursts of passion are terrifically grand. There is no grimace,—no exaggeration. They are terrible in their downright earnestness and apparent truth. Nothing could be more heart-thrilling than the noble rage with which he delivered the well-known passage,—

'I had rather be a toad,
And live upon the vapor of a dungeon,
Than keep a corner in the thing I love,
For others' uses;'

nothing more glorious than the burst in which he volleyed forth the following passage, suppressed by the barbarians of our theatres,—

'Like to the Pontic Sea,
Whose icy current and compulsive course
Ne'er feels retiring ebb, but keeps due on
To the Propontic and the Hellespont;
Even so my bloody thoughts, with violent pace,
Shall ne'er look back, ne'er ebb to humble love,
Till that a capable and wide revenge
Swallow them up.'

Throughout the part, as he enacted it, there were several new readings, in the player's phrase. They were all good,—they all conveyed to us, who love Shakspeare, new ideas. Forrest, apart from his playing, is no common man. In many scenes of the play, in which it was the fashion to rant, Forrest contented himself with the appropriate display of dignified and quiet power, This was beyond praise."

The following extract is from the notice in the John Bull:

"It is where Iago first attempts to rouse the jealousy of Othello, and, having created the spark, succeeds in fanning it to a consuming fire, that Mr. Forrest may be said to have been truly great. Slowly he appeared to indulge the suspicion of his wife's infidelity; in silent agony the conviction seemed to be creeping upon him,—his iron sinews trembling with dreadful and conflicting emotions,—rapid as thought were his denunciations; and, with all the weakness of woman, he again relapsed into tenderness,

—pain had a respite, and hope a prospect. Then came his fearful and startling challenge to Iago, ending,—

> 'If thou dost slander her, and torture me,
> Never pray more: abandon all remorse;
> On horror's head horrors accumulate:
> Do deeds to make heaven weep, all earth amazed;
> For nothing canst thou to damnation add
> Greater than that.'

"The almost savage energy with which this passage was delivered produced an indescribable effect. Three long and distinct rounds of applause testified how highly the audience was delighted with this master-effort; and the most prejudiced must have been convinced that they were witnessing the acting of no ordinary man."

The critique in the Albion was a notable one:

"Mr. Forrest made his first appearance on our boards on Monday last, in the part of Othello. Mr. Forrest possesses a fine person, an excellent thing in either man or woman; but, though this has been much dwelt upon by the London critics, it is but a very minor affair when speaking of such a man as Mr. Forrest. He carries himself with exceeding grace and dignity, and his tread is easy and majestic: he dresses with taste and magnificence. The picture which he presented of the Moor was one of the most perfect which we have witnessed. He gave us to see, like Desdemona, 'Othello's visage in his mind,' of which he furnished us with a beautiful and highly-finished portrait. Not content with acting each scene well, he gave us a consistent transcript of the whole matter. Each succeeding scene was in strict keeping with those that had preceded it, showing that the actor had grasped the whole plot from beginning to end, and that, from commencement to catastrophe, he had embodied himself into strict identity with the person represented. His early scenes were distinguished by a quiet and calm dignity of demeanor, which, concomitant with the deepest tenderness of feeling, and a high tone of manliness, he seems to have conceived the basis of the Moor's character. In his address to the Senate, this dignified self-possession, and a sense of what was due to himself, he made particularly conspicuous. As the interest of the tragedy advanced, we saw, with exceeding pleasure, that Mr. Forrest was determined to de-

pend for success upon the precept set forth by Shakspeare, 'To hold the mirror up to nature.' With proper confidence in his own powers, he disdained to overstep the prescribed bound for the sake of producing effects equally at variance with nature and heterodox to good taste. In the scene where he quells the drunken brawl, his acting throughout was strikingly impressive of reality. Some of his ideas were novel, and beautifully accordant with the tone of the character which he wished to develop. Such was his recitation of the passage,—

> 'Silence that dreadful bell! it frights the isle
> From her propriety.'

From the general group he turned to a single attendant who stood at his elbow, and delivered the command in a subdued tone, as though it were not intended for the ear of the multitude. This, though effective, was judicious, and not overstrained. His dismissal of Cassio was equally illustrative of the spirit to which we have alluded. The audience testified their approbation by a loud burst of applause. The final scene with Iago was beautifully played: the gradual workings of his mind from calmness to jealousy were displayed with striking effect. The transitions of emotion in the following splendid passage were finely marked:

> 'If I do prove her haggard,
> Though that her jesses were my dear heartstrings,
> I'd whistle her off, and let her down the wind,
> To prey at fortune. Haply, for I am black,
> And have not those soft parts of conversation
> That chamberers have: Or, for I am declined
> Into the vale of years; yet that's not much:
> She's gone: I am abused: and my relief
> Must be to loathe her. O the curse of marriage,
> That we can call these delicate creatures ours,
> And not their appetites! I'd rather be a toad,
> And live upon the vapor of a dungeon,
> Than keep a corner in the thing I love,
> For others' uses.
> Desdemona comes!'

The burst of mixed passions with which he uttered the first of these sentences was terrific. His voice then sank into tones the most touching, expressive of complaining regret. The conclusion seemed to have excited him to the most extreme pitch of

loathing and disgust, and, as he sees Desdemona advancing, he, for a few moments, gazed upon her with horror. The feeling gave way, and all his former tenderness seemed to return as he exclaimed,—

> 'If she be false, O then Heaven mocks itself,—
> I'll not believe it.'

The subsequent scene with Iago, a trial of physical as well as mental strength, was well sustained. It is here that Iago, by a series of artful manœuvres, screws the Moor up to the sticking-place. To the conclusion of the scene the vehement passions are continually increasing, and the difficulty is for an actor so to manage his powers as to give full effect to the whole, without sinking into apparent tameness in the last imprecation. We will not attempt any description of the bedchamber scene. The reiterated and protracted plaudits of the audience showed how highly it was appreciated. The dying-scene was equally novel and excellent. At the fall of the curtain the audience testified their delight and approbation by the most marked and vehement applause, which continued for several minutes."

The London Journal gave a long account of Forrest's Lear, of which this extract contains the substance:

"We have been much amused by the conflict of opinion respecting this representation. Some describe it as one of the most magnificent triumphs of this or any age. Another denounces the performance as an idle and false imposition, and the actor as an ignorant empiric, who has crossed the Atlantic solely to practise on the gullibility of John Bull. We do not think John quite so gullible; we do not believe that in matters of intellectual recreation he is so apt to take

> 'Those tenders for true pay
> Which are not sterling.'

We consider it may be pretty safely taken as a general rule that the large popularity of any artist is here synonymous only with great talent. We had also seen quite enough of Mr. Forrest to convince us that he is a man of real talent, with very little, if any, mere trickery in his acting, so that to stigmatize him as a quack or an impostor was as great a violation of truth as of good feeling. At

the same time, it is right we should remark that the estimate we had formed of his genius, from his previous representations, was not sufficiently high to induce a belief in all that his eulogists pronounced on his Lear. We, therefore, came to the conclusion that in this case, as in others where opinions are so remote from each other, the truth would, probably, be found midway between the two extremes; and, on seeing and judging for ourselves on Monday night, found our conclusion fully warranted. The general conception of the 'poor old king' is most accurately taken, and his general execution of it fervid, earnest, and harmonious. He has evidently grappled with the character manfully, and he never lets go his hold. The carefulness of his study is sometimes a little too obvious, giving an injurious hardness and over-precision. The awful malediction of Goneril—that fearful curse, which can scarcely be even read without trembling—was delivered by Mr. Forrest with a power and intensity we never saw surpassed by any actor of Lear. It was an exhibition likely to follow a young play-goer to his pillow and mix itself with his dreams. Shakspeare has here given us a wild burst of uncontrolled and uncontrollable rage, mixed with a deep pathos, which connects the very terms of the curse with the cause of the passion,—an awful prayer for a retribution as just as terrible. All this Mr. Forrest evidently understood and felt; and he therefore made his audience feel it with him. The almost supernatural energy with which Lear seems to be carried on to the very termination of the malediction, when the passion exhausts itself and him, was portrayed by Mr. Forrest with fearful reality and effect. He also greatly excelled in the passage,—

> 'No, you unnatural hags,
> I will have such revenges on you both,
> That all the world shall—I will do such things,—
> What they are yet, I know not; but they shall be
> The terrors of the earth.'

His delivery of these lines was marked with the same truth and power as the curse, and very finely displayed the energy of will and impotence of action which form so touching a combination in Lear's character. But perhaps the very best point in Mr. Forrest's Lear, because the most delicate and difficult passage for an actor to realize, was his manner of giving the lines,—

'My wits begin to turn.—
Come on, my boy: how dost, my boy? Art cold?
I am cold myself. . . .
Poor fool and knave, I have one part in my heart
That's sorry yet for thee.'

This beautiful passage is extremely touching, and Mr. Forrest fully felt and adequately illustrated its pathos and its beauty."

Another of the authorities in British journalism, whose title the writer cannot recover, wrote thus:

"If Mr. Forrest is great in Othello, we do not hesitate to say he is much greater in Lear. Here the verisimilitude is perfect. From the moment of his entrance to the finely-portrayed death, every passion which rages in that brain—the love, the madness, the ambition, the despair—is given the more forcibly that it flashes through the feebleness of age. In that powerful scene where the bereaved monarch laments over his dead daughter, Mr. Forrest acted pre-eminently well. He bears in her lifeless body and makes such a moan over it as would force tears from a Stoic. None, we think, who heard him put the plaintive but powerful interrogatory,—

'Why should a dog, a horse, a rat, have life,
And thou no breath at all?'—

followed by the bitter and melancholy reflection,—

'O! thou wilt come no more,
Never! never! never! never! never!'

will ever forget the anguish depicted on Mr. Forrest's features, or the heart-piercing melancholy of his tones. Mr. Forrest evinced, throughout, a fine conception of the character. He did not surprise us by a burst of genius now and then. His performance was equable,—it was distinguished in every part by deep and intense feeling. The curse levelled against Goneril (one of the most fearful passages ever penned by man) was given with awful force. The last member of the speech—

'That she may feel
How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
To have a thankless child!'—

was poured forth with an unrestrained but natural energy that acted like an electric shock on the audience; a momentary silence

succeeded it; but immediately afterwards a simultaneous burst of applause attested the great triumph of the actor. His mad-scenes, when, delighting in a crown and sceptre of straw, Lear proclaims himself 'every inch a king,' were admirably conceived, and no less admirably acted. There was no straining after effect, —there was no grimacery. We saw before us the 'poor, weak, and despised old man,'—the 'more sinned against than sinning,' —reduced to a state of second childhood, and paying the too severe penalty which his folly and his credulity, in listening to the hyperboles of his elder daughters and rejecting the true filial affection of his youngest and once his most beloved child, exacted from him."

It may be well, also, to quote what was said by the "London Times" of November 5th:

"The part of Lear is one which many otherwise eminent actors have found above, or at least unsuited to, their capacities. Mr. Forrest played it decidedly better than anything he has as yet essayed in this country. His conception of the character is accurate, and his execution was uncommonly powerful and effective. If it be, as it cannot be disputed that it is, a test of an actor's skill that he is able to rivet the attention of the audience, and so to engage their thoughts and sympathies that they have not leisure even to applaud on the instant, he may be said to have succeeded most completely last night. From the beginning of the play to the end, it was obvious that he exercised this power over the spectators. While he was speaking, the most profound silence prevailed, and it was not until he had concluded that the delight of the audience vented itself in loud applause. This was particularly remarkable in his delivery of Lear's curse upon his daughters, the effect of which was more powerful than anything that has lately been done on the stage. It is not, however, upon particular passages that the excellence of the performance depended; its great merit was that it was a whole, complete and finished. The spirit in which it began was equally sustained throughout, and, as a delineation of character and passion, it was natural, true, and vigorous, in a very remarkable degree. The mad-scenes were admirably played; and the last painful scene, so painful that it might well be dispensed with, was given with considerable power. The great accuracy and fidelity with which

the decrepitude of the aged monarch was portrayed was not among the least meritorious parts of the performance. The palsied head and quivering limbs were so correctly given as to prove that the actor's attention has been sedulously devoted to the attempt to make the performance as perfect as possible. A striking proof of his sense of the propriety of keeping up the illusion he had created was manifested in his reappearance, in obedience to the loud and general call of the audience, at the end of the tragedy. He came on, preserving the same tottering gait which he had maintained throughout, and bowed his thanks as much in the guise of Lear as he had acted in the drama. This would have been almost ridiculous in any but a very skilful actor: in him it served to prevent too sudden a dissipation of the dramatic illusion."

The critical notices of the Macbeth of Forrest were of the same average as the foregoing estimates of his other parts, though the faults pointed out were generally of a description the exact opposite of those currently ascribed to his acting. He was considered too subdued and tame in the part:

"Mr. Forrest essayed the difficult character of Macbeth, for the first time in this country, on Wednesday evening. We are inclined to think that this highly-gifted actor has not often attempted this part; because, though his performance displayed many noble traits of genius, yet it could not, as a whole, boast of that equally-sustained excellence by which his personation of Lear and of Othello was distinguished. We were highly gratified by his exertions in that part of the second act which commences with the 'dagger soliloquy,' and ends with Macbeth's exit, overwhelmed with fear, horror, and remorse. There is no man on the stage at present who could, in this scene, produce so terrific an effect. Never did we see the bitterness of remorse, the pangs of guilt-condemning conscience, so powerfully portrayed. The storm of feeling by which the soul of Macbeth is assailed, spoke in the agitated limbs of Mr. Forrest, and in the wild, unearthly glare of his eye, ere he had uttered a word. On his entrance after his bloody mission to Duncan's chamber, Mr. Forrest introduced a new and a very striking point. Absorbed in the recollection of the crime which he has committed, he does not perceive Lady Macbeth till she seizes his arm. Then, acting

under the impulse of a mind fraught with horror, he starts back, uttering an exclamation of fear, as if his way had been barred by some supernatural power. This fine touch, so true to the scene and to nature, drew down several rounds of applause. In the banquet scene, too, his acting was very fine; and the greater part of the fifth act was supported with extraordinary energy. That passage in which, having heard that 'a wood does come toward Dunsinane,' Macbeth exclaims to the messenger,—

> 'If thou speak'st false,
> Upon the next tree shalt thou hang alive,
> Till famine cling thee:—if thy speech be sooth,
> I care not if thou dost for me as much,'—

was delivered with astonishing force. Mr. Forrest gave those melancholy reminiscences which occasionally float over the saddened mind of Macbeth with intense and searching feeling. There was, however, in many parts of his performance a lack of power. Mr. Forrest was too subdued,—too colloquial. The speech of Macbeth, after the discovery of the murder,—

> 'Had I but died an hour before this chance,
> I had lived a blessed time,'—

was delivered with most inappropriate calmness. Macbeth would have here 'assumed a virtue though he had it not,' and poured forth his complainings in a louder tone. Again, Macbeth's answer to Macduff, who demands why he has slain the sleepy grooms,—

> 'Who can be wise, amazed, temperate and furious,
> Loyal and neutral, in a moment?—No man!'—

was wholly deficient in spirit, until Mr. Forrest came to the last member of the sentence, which was given with due and proper emphasis. In the rencounter with Macduff, where Macbeth declares that he 'bears a charmed life,' the passage ought to be uttered as the proud boast of one who was confident of supernatural protection, and not in a taunting, sneering manner. Mr. Forrest's error is on the right side, and is very easily corrected. Doubtless, in his future performance of the character he will assume a higher tone in those parts of the play to which we have alluded."

The Morning Chronicle said,—

"Mr. Forrest appeared last evening in the character of Macbeth, and in the performance of it fully sustained the reputation he has already obtained in the parts of Othello and Lear. Mr. Forrest brings to the performance of Shakspeare's heroes an energy and vigor, tempered with a taste and judgment, such as we rarely find combined in any who venture to tread the stage. There is, besides, a reality in his acting, an actual identification of himself with the character he impersonates, stronger than in any actor we have ever seen. If this was remarkable in his performance of Othello and Lear, it is not less so in the performance of Macbeth. From the first act to the last—from his first interview with the weird sisters, whose vague prophecy instills into the mind that feeling of 'vaulting ambition' which leads him to the commission of so many crimes, to the last scene, in which he finds his charms dissolved, and begins, too late, to doubt 'the equivocation of the fiend'—he carried the audience completely with him, and made them at times wholly unmindful of the skill of the actor, from the interest excited in the actions of Macbeth."

In addition to his renderings of Spartacus, Othello, Lear, and Macbeth, Forrest appeared also as Damon, and achieved a success similar to that he had won in the same part at home.

"The part of *Damon* is decidedly beneath Mr. Forrest's acknowledged talents. No man could, however, have made more of the character than he did, whether he appeared as the stern, uncompromising patriot, the deep-feeling husband and father, or the generous and devoted friend. His rebuke of the slavish senate, who crouch at the feet of the tyrant Dionysius, was delivered with calm and earnest dignity; but his two great scenes were that in which he learns that his freedman, Lucullus, has slain his horse to prevent the anxious Damon from arriving in time to rescue his beloved Pythias from the hands of the executioner; and that with which the piece concludes, where, breathless and exhausted, he rushes into the presence of his despairing friend.

"The burst of passionate fury with which he assailed the affrighted freedman, in the former scene, was awfully fearful; and his expression of wild, frantic, overwhelming joy when he beholds Pythias in safety, and can only manifest his feelings by hysteric laughter, was perfectly true to nature. Mr. Forrest's performance was most amply and justly applauded."

The actor had every reason to feel well pleased with the results of his bold undertaking. His emotions are expressed in a letter written to his mother under date of Liverpool, January 2d, 1837, in the course of which he says,—

"Before this you have doubtless heard of my great triumphs in Drury Lane Theatre; though I must confess I did not think they treated the Gladiator and my friend Dr. Bird fairly. Yet, as far as regards myself, I never have been more successful, even in my own dear land. In the characters of Shakspeare alone would they hear me; and night after night in overwhelming crowds they came, and showered their hearty applause on my efforts. This, my dear mother, is a triumphant refutation of those prejudiced opinions so often repeated of me in America by a few ignorant scribblers, who but for the actors would never have understood one line of the immortal bard."

But a fuller statement of his impressions in London, with interesting glimpses of his social life there, is contained in a letter to Leggett:

". . . My success in England has been very great. While the people evinced no great admiration of the Gladiator, they came in crowds to witness my personation of Othello, Lear, and Macbeth. I commenced my engagement on the 17th of October at 'Old Drury,' and terminated it on the 19th of December, having acted in all thirty-two nights, and represented those three characters of Shakspeare twenty-four out of the thirty-two, namely, Othello nine times, Macbeth seven, and King Lear eight,—this last having been repeated oftener by me than by any other actor on the London boards in the same space of time, except Kean alone. This approbation of my Shakspeare parts gives me peculiar pleasure, as it refutes the opinions very confidently expressed by a certain *clique* at home that I would fail in those characters before a London audience.

"But it is not only from my reception within the walls of the theatre that I have reason to be pleased with my English friends. I have received many grateful kindnesses in their hospitable homes, and in their intellectual fireside circles have drunk both instruction and delight. I suppose you saw in the newspapers that a dinner was given to me by the Garrick Club. Serjeant Talfourd presided, and made a very happy and complimentary

speech, to which I replied. Charles Kemble and Mr. Macready were there. The latter gentleman has behaved in the handsomest manner to me. Before I arrived in England, he had spoken of me in the most flattering terms, and on my arrival he embraced the earliest opportunity to call upon me, since which time he has extended to me many delicate courtesies and attentions, all showing the native kindness of his heart, and great refinement and good breeding. The dinner at the Garrick was attended by many of the most distinguished men.

"I feel under great obligations to Mr. Stephen Price, who has shown me not only the hospitalities which he knows so well how to perform, but many other attentions which have been of great service to me, and which, from his long experience in theatrical matters, he was more competent to render than any other person. He has done me the honor to present me with a copy of Shakspeare and a Richard's sword, which were the property of Kean. Would that he could bestow upon me his *mantle* instead of his weapon! Mr. Charles Kemble, too, has tendered me, in the kindest manner, two swords, one of which belonged to his truly eminent brother, and the other to the great Talma, the theatrical idol of the *grande nation*.

"The London press, as you probably have noticed, has been divided concerning my professional merits; though as a good republican I ought to be satisfied, seeing I had an overwhelming majority on my side. There is a degree of dignity and critical precision and force in their articles generally (I speak of those against me, as well as for me, and others, also, of which my acting was not the subject) that place them far above the newspaper criticisms of stage performances which we meet with in our country. Their comments always show one thing,—that they have read and appreciated the writings of their chief dramatists; while with us there are many who would hardly know, were it not for the actors, that Shakspeare had ever existed. The audiences, too, have a quick and keen perception of the beauties of the drama. They seem, from the timeliness and proportion of their applause, to possess a previous knowledge of the text. They applaud warmly, but seasonably. They do not interrupt a passion and oblige the actor to sustain it beyond the propriety of nature; but if he delineates it forcibly and truly, they reward him in the in-

tervals of the dialogue. Variations from the accustomed modes, though not in any palpable new readings,—which, for the most part, are bad readings, for there is generally but one mode positively correct, and that has not been left for us to discover,—but slight changes in emphasis, tone, or action, delicate shadings and pencillings, are observed with singular and most gratifying quickness. You find that your study of Shakspeare has not been thrown away; that your attempt to grasp the character in its 'gross and scope,' as well as in its details, so as not merely to know how to speak what is written, but to preserve its truth and keeping in a new succession of incidents, could it be exposed to them,—you find that this is seen and appreciated by the audience; and the evidence that they see and feel is given with an emphasis and heartiness that make the theatre shake.

"Though my success in London, and now here, has been great beyond my fondest expectations; though the intoxicating cup of popular applause is pressed nightly, overflowing, to my lips; and though in private I receive all sorts of grateful kindnesses and courtesies,—yet—yet—to tell the truth—there are moments when a feeling of homesickness comes upon me, and I would give up all this harvest of profit and fame which I am gathering, to be once more in my 'ain hame' and under 'the bright skies of my own free land."

The above estimate of British dramatic criticism is a little rose-colored, from the imperfect experience of the writer at the time. It was not long before he knew more of it in its less attractive aspect. For he found that the same unhappy influences of personal prejudice and spite, of ignorance and spleen, of cabal interest and corruption, which betrayed themselves in the American press, were conspicuously shown also in the English. Only a few months before the arrival of Forrest, a company of French players from Paris had attempted to perform in London, and had been subjected to treatment, through the instigation of the rival theatres, which had caused their failure and deeply disgraced and mortified the public. The intense self-interest and notorious jealousy of prominent players, as a class, produced in London, as elsewhere, cliques who set up as champions each of its favorite performer, and strove to advance him, not only by rightful means, but likewise by the illegitimate method of putting his competi-

tors down. The chosen literary tool of a great tragedian, the newspaper critic who arrogates to represent his interests, very often volunteers services with which his principal has nothing to do. It was so in London while Forrest played in Drury Lane. Macready, Vandenhoff, Charles Kemble, Charles Kean, and Booth all had rival engagements. Three different newspapers were the respective organs of three of these actors. All three agreed in depreciating and abusing the stranger, while each one at the same time spoke with detraction and sneers of the favorites of the other two. While the general press spoke fairly of each performer, and gave Forrest such notices as more than satisfied him and his friends, these special papers indulged in fulsome eulogy of their chosen idol and assailed the others with satire and insult. For example, one writer says of Kean, "He stars in country theatres, where his power of exaggerating the faults of his father's acting gives delight to the unwashed of the gallery, who like handsome dresses, noise, stamping, bustle, and splutter." A second says of Booth, "Bunn, in his drowning desperation, catches at straws. He has put forward Booth, the shadow and foil of Kean in bygone days. His Richard seems to have been a wretched failure." A third says of Macready in Othello, in the scene with Iago and Brabantio, "He comes on the stage with the air of a sentimental negro rehearsing the part of Hamlet." And a fourth characterizes the voice of Macready "as a combination of grunt, guttural, and spasm." After such specimens of "criticism" on their own countrymen, one need not feel surprised to read notices of a foreigner, inspired by the same spirit, like the following from the "Examiner": "Mr. Forrest has appeared in Mr. Howard Payne's foolish compilation called Brutus. This is an American tragedy, and not ill-suited, on the whole, to Mr. Forrest's style. The result was amazingly disagreeable." The animus of such writing is so obvious to every person of insight that it falls short of its mark, and does no injury to the artist ridiculed. The writer shows himself, as one of his contemporaries said, not a critic, but a caviller,—a gad-fly of the drama.

Among the squibs that flew on all sides among the partisans, abounding in phrases like "the icy stilts and bombastic pomposity of Vandenhoff," "the stiff and disagreeable mannerism of Macready," "the affected, half-convulsive croaking of Charles

Kean," "the awkward ignorance and brutality of Forrest," the American actor was treated, on the whole, as well as the English ones. A gentleman who had a private box in Drury Lane lent it to a friend to see Forrest in Othello. But it was one of his off-nights, in which Booth was substituted as Richard. The next morning these lines appeared in a public print, as full of injustice as such things usually are:

"Of Shakspeare in *barns* we have heard;
Yet who has the patience, forsooth,
To witness King Richard the Third,
Enacted to-night in a—BOOTH?
The order to you I have brought,
Not liking the Manager's trick;
For instead of the FORREST I sought,
He now only offers a *stick*."

The impression he made, however, his great and unquestionable success, are best shown by certain salient facts with which the dramatic critics, prejudiced or unprejudiced, had nothing to do: the brilliant public banquet given in his honor by the Garrick Club, with Thomas Noon Talfourd in the chair; the exhibition, at the Somerset House, of his full-length portrait as Macbeth in the dagger-scene; and the numerous valuable presents made to him by various eminent men, including a superb original oil-portrait of Garrick;—these tell their own story. At the close of his first engagement a testimonial was given him by his fellow-actors, every one of them spontaneously joining in the contribution. It was, as the "Morning Herald" described it, "a splendid snuff-box of tortoise-shell, lined and mounted with gold, with a mosaic lid, and the inscription,—

"To Edwin Forrest, Esq., the American tragedian, from the performers of the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, in testimony of their admiration of his talent as an actor, and their respect for him as a man. 'His worth is warrant for his welcome hither.'—SHAKSPEARE."

The prolonged stay of Forrest in England was ostensibly to continue for another season the brilliant professional life there opened to him. But, in reality, a tenderer attraction constituted his principal motive. He had met in the fashionable circles of the art life of London a young lady of extreme beauty and of accom-

plished manners, thoroughly imbued with musical and dramatic tastes, who had quite won his heart. This was Catherine Norton Sinclair, daughter of a very distinguished English vocalist. Miss Sinclair, with much force of character and grace and vivacity of demeanor, had a personal loveliness which gave her distinction wherever she appeared, and an ingenuous sympathetic expression which made her a general favorite. She was the first and only woman whom Forrest, with all his earnest but not absorbing amours, had ever seriously thought of marrying. Her image, fixed in his bewitched imagination wherever he went, made him impatient to be with her again in fact. This was the magnet that drew him, after every departure, so quickly back to London. The maiden, on the other hand, was as much enamored as the man. More than thirty-six years afterwards, when he was lying cold in his coffin, and so much of joy and hope and pain and tragic grief lay buried between their separated souls, she said, "The first time I saw him—I recall it now as clearly as though it were but yesterday—the impression he made was so instantaneous and so strong, that I remember I whispered to myself, while a thrill ran through me, 'This is the handsomest man on whom my eyes have ever fallen.'" On meeting they were mutually smitten, and the passion grew, and no obstacles intervened, and they were betrothed. The intervals between his starring engagements in the chief cities of the United Kingdom he spent in courtship. It was a period of divine intoxication, which they alone who have had a kindred experience can understand, when life was all a current of bliss in a world sparkling with enchantment. A favorite poet has said,—

> "Oh, time is sweet when roses meet,
> With June's soft breath around them;
> And sweet the cost when hearts are lost,
> If those we love have found them;"

and it was in 1837, on one of the fairest days of an English June, —a day which, no doubt, they fondly supposed would stand thenceforth as the most golden in all the calendar of their lives,— that the happy pair were married, in the grand old cathedral of Saint Paul, in London. The officiating clergyman was the Rev. Henry Hart Milman, a man equally renowned as preacher, scholar, historian, and poet. The service was performed in an imposing

manner, before a brilliant assemblage, with every propitious omen and the loving wishes of the multitude of friends whose sympathies were there from both sides of the sea. Then followed the long, delicious honeymoon, in which newly-wed lovers withdraw from the world to be all the world to each other. Every benediction hovered over them,—love, youth, health, beauty, fortune, the blessing of parents, the pride of friends, the gilded vision of popularity. Nor was the entrancement of their dream broken when they found themselves, in the autumn, at home in the Republic of the West, welcomed with outstretched hands by the friendly throng, who, as they came in sight, stood shouting on the shore.

CHAPTER XII.

MERIDIAN OF SUCCESS AND REPUTATION.—NEW RÔLES OF FEBRO, MELNOTTE, AND JACK CADE.

THE interest of his friends and of the public at large in the returning actor was increased by the laurels he had won in the mother-country, and the prize hanging on his arm, whose beauty lent a choicer domestic lustre to his professional glory. Wherever he played, the theatre was crowded to overflowing, and the receipts and the applause were unprecedented. The only alloy in his cup—and this was not then so copious or so bitter as it afterwards became—was the acrimonious and envenomed criticism springing alike from the envious and malignant, who cannot see any one successful without assailing him, and from those whose tastes were displeased or whose prejudices were offended by his peculiarities.

While fulfilling an engagement in Boston, he received a very characteristic letter from Leggett, which may serve as a specimen of their correspondence. It will be seen that the tragedian had urged on the editor the writing of a play for him on the theme of Jack Cade and his rebellion. He afterwards induced Conrad to reconstruct his play of Aylmere, which in its original form was not suited to his ideas.

"NEW YORK, Wednesday evening, Oct. 25th.

"MY DEAR FORREST,—I was in hopes of having a line from you before this time, telling the Boston news, or so much of it at least as concerns you and yours, which is what I care to hear. But you are determined, I suppose, to maintain the character you have so well earned, of being a most dilatory correspondent. I have had the pleasure of hearing this evening, however, through another channel, that you are drawing full houses; and I trust that all is going on well in other respects. Placide and I took a walk

out to Bloomingdale last Sunday afternoon, and as we were returning we conjectured that you and Catherine were just sitting down at the board of Mr. and Mrs. Manager Barry.

"I have been down town this evening for the first time these several days. I extended my walk to the Park Theatre, where Miss Tree was performing *Rosalind*. The house was about $500; that at the National, Vandenhoff, could not have exceeded $300. Miss Tree's engagement will conclude with her benefit on Friday evening, when she will probably have between $900 and $1000, making her average for the eleven nights about $650. This is considered a very handsome business. Mad. Caridora Allen opens on Monday evening, and her box sheet already shows a fine display of fashionable names. She will have a full and *fine* house. She has been giving a touch of her quality at some of the soirées of the exclusives, and is pronounced just the thing. The Woodworth benefit limps tediously along. The returning of your money makes a good deal of talk, and the conduct of the committee is much censured. The motive, to injure you, and foist up Vandenhoff at your expense, will meet with a sad discomfiture. My good public is too clear-sighted to be humbugged in so plain a matter.

"I hope you continue to make yourself acquainted with that insolent patrician *Coriolanus*. He was not quite so much of a democrat as you and I are; but that is no reason why we should not use him if he can do us a service. I wish Shakspeare, with all his divine attributes, had only had a little of that ennobling love of equal human liberty which is now animating the hearts of true patriots all over the world, and is destined, ere long, to effect a great and glorious change in the condition of mankind. What a vast and godlike influence he might have exerted in moulding the public mind and guiding the upward progress of nations, if his great genius had not been dazzled by the false glitter of aristocratic institutions, and blinded to the equal rights of the great family of man! Had I a little of his transcendent intellect, I would assert the principles of democratic freedom in a voice that should 'fill the world with echoes.'

"My own affairs remain in *statu quo*. I am still undetermined what to do. I have been solicited to write for the democratic 'Monthly Review,' just established in Washington, and there is

some talk among the politicians here of getting up a morning paper, and offering me the place of principal editor. I have been turning over the Jack Cade subject; but I confess I am almost afraid to undertake it. The theme is a grand one, and I warm when I think of it; but I must not mistake the ardor of my feelings in the sacred cause of human liberty for ability to manage the mighty subject. Besides, the prejudices and prepossessions of the world are against me, with Shakspeare on their side. Who must not feel his feebleness and insignificance when called to enter the list against such an antagonist? I must do something, however, and shortly; for I can now say, with *Jaffier*, though unlike him I am not devout enough to thank Heaven for it, that I am not worth a ducat.

"I took a walk out to New Rochelle on Monday afternoon, and returned yesterday morning. I need not say that you were the theme of much of the conversation while I was there. Many questions were asked me concerning your 'handsome English wife.'

"I shall long very earnestly for the 18th of December to arrive, when I count upon enjoying another month of happiness. 'How happily the days of Thalaba went by' during the five weeks of your late sojourn in this city! I shall not speedily forget those pleasant evenings.

"It is past midnight now, and Elmira has been long in bed; otherwise I should be enjoined to add her love to mine.

"Good-night, and God bless you both.

"Yours ever,

"Wm. Leggett."

Not long after his return from England, some of the most distinguished of his fellow-citizens joined in giving him the compliment of a public dinner. The festival was of a sumptuous and magnificent character, and drawing together, as it did, nearly all the marked talent and celebrity of Philadelphia, the honor was felt to be one of no ordinary value. Nicholas Biddle was president, supported by six vice-presidents and eleven managers. The banquet was held on the 15th of December, 1837. Over two hundred gentlemen sat down at the table. Mr. Biddle being kept away by a severe illness, the chair was occupied by Hon. J. R.

Ingersoll; Mr. Forrest was on his right, and in the immediate vicinity were Chief-Justice Gibson, Judge Rogers, Recorder Conrad, Colonel Swift, Mayor of the city, Dr. Jackson, of the University of Pennsylvania, Prof. Mitchell, Dr. Calhoun, Dean of Jefferson College, Morton McMichael, Robert Morris, R. Penn Smith, and Messrs. Dunlap, Banks, Bell, and Doran, members of the Convention then sitting to revise the Constitution of the State. Leggett was present from New York, by special invitation.

The room was elegantly ornamented. The name of the chief guest was woven in wreaths around the pyramids of confectionery, branded on the bottles of wine, and embossed about various articles of the dessert. No pains were spared to add to the entertainment every charm of grace and taste adapted to gratify its recipient. One of the city papers said, the next morning,—

"On no former occasion in Philadelphia has there been so numerous and brilliant an assemblage for any similar purpose. The selectness of the company, the zeal and enthusiasm they exhibited, and the cordial greetings they bestowed, must have been especially gratifying to the feelings of Mr. Forrest, springing as these testimonials did from a proud recognition of his worth as a townsman."

The following letter explained the absence of the chosen president of the day:

"PHILADELPHIA, Dec. 15th, 1837.

"HON. R. T. CONRAD.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I regret much that indisposition will prevent me from joining your festival to-day. Feeling, as I do, an intense nationality, which makes the fame of every citizen the common property of the country, I rejoice at all the developments of intellectual power among our countrymen in every walk of life, and I am always anxious to do honor to high faculties combined with personal worth. Such a union the common voice ascribes to Mr. Forrest, and I would have gladly added my own applause to the general homage. But this is impracticable now, and I can therefore only convey through you a sentiment which, if it wants the vigorous expression of health, has at least a sick man's sincerity. It is,—

"The genius of our country, whenever and wherever displayed, —honor to its triumphs in every field of fame.

"With great regard, yours,

"N. BIDDLE."

The cloth having been removed, Mr. Ingersoll rose, and said,—

"The friends of the drama are desirous of paying a merited tribute of respect and esteem to one of the most distinguished and successful of its sons. Well-approved usage upon occasions not dissimilar has pointed to this our cheerful greeting as a fitting method for carrying their desires into effect. It combines the compliment of public and unequivocal demonstration with the kindness and cordiality of social intercourse. It serves to express at once *opinions* the result of deliberate judgment, and *sentiments* warm and faithful from the heart.

"To our guest we owe much for having devoted to the profession which he has selected an uncommon energy of character and peculiar personal aptitudes. They are both adapted to the happiest illustrations of an art which, in the absence of *either*, would want a finished representative, but, by a rare combination of faculties in *him*, is enabled effectually 'to hold the mirror up to nature.' It is an art, in the rational pleasures and substantial advantages derived from which all are free to participate, and a large proportion of the educated and liberal-minded avail themselves of the privilege. It is an art which, for thousands of years, has been practised with success, admired, and esteemed; and the men who have adorned it by their talents have received the well-earned plaudits of their age, and the honors of a cherished name.

"To our guest we owe the acknowledgment (long delayed, indeed) of the sternest critics of an experienced and enlightened public, not our own, that of one department at least of elegant literature our country has produced the brightest living representative.

"To our guest we owe especial thanks that he has been the prompt, uniform, and liberal patron of his art; that dramatic genius and merit have never appealed to him for aid in vain; that he has devoted the best-directed generosity, and some of his most brilliant professional efforts, to their cause.

"To our guest we owe unmeasured thanks that he has done

much by his personal exertion, study, and example, to identify our stage with the classic drama, and that he has made the more than modern Æschylus—the myriad-minded Shakspeare—*ours*.

"We owe him thanks, as members of a well-regulated community, that, by the course and current of his domestic life, the reproaches that are sometimes cast upon his profession have been signally disarmed.

"And, in this moment of joyous festivity, we feel that we owe him unnumbered thanks that he has offered us an opportunity to express for him an unfeigned and cordial regard.

"These sentiments are embraced in a brief but comprehensive toast, which I will ask leave to offer,—

"The *Stage* and its MASTER."

Amid loud and long applause, Forrest rose, bowed his acknowledgments, and replied,—

"MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN,—I feel too deeply the honor this day rendered me to be able to express myself in terms of adequate meaning. There are times when the tongue is at best but a poor interpreter of the heart. The strongest emotions do not always clothe themselves in the strongest language. The words which rise to my lips seem too cold and vapid to denote truly the sentiments which prompt them. They lack that terseness and energy which the occasion deserves.

"The actor usually comes before the public in a 'fiction, in a dream of passion,' and his aim is to suit his utterance and the ''havior of the visage' to the unreal situation. But the resources of my art do not avail me here. This is no pageant of the stage, to be forgotten with the hour, nor this an audience drawn to view its mimic scenes.

"I stand amidst a numerous throng of the chiefest denizens of my native city, convened to do me honor; and this costly banquet they present to me, a munificent token of public regard. I feel, indeed, that I am no actor here. My bosom throbs with undissembled agitation, and in the grateful tumult of my thoughts I cannot 'beget a temperance to give smoothness' to my acknowledgments for so proud a tribute. In the simplest form of speech, then, let me assure you from my inmost heart, I thank you.

"I have but recently returned from England, after performing many nights on those boards where the master-spirits of the stage

achieved their noblest triumphs. You have heard from other sources with what kindness I was received, and with what bounteous applause my efforts were rewarded. Throughout my sojourn abroad I experienced only the most candid and liberal treatment from the public, and the most elegant and cordial hospitality in private. But I rejoice that the time has come round which brings me again to the point from which I started; which places me among those friends whose partial kindness discovered the first unfoldings of my mind, and watched it with assiduous care through all the stages of its subsequent development. The applause of foreign audiences was soothing to my pride, but that which I received at home had aroused a deeper sentiment. The people of England bestowed their approbation on the results of long practice and severe study, but my countrymen gave me theirs in generous anticipation of those results.

"*They* looked with indulgence on the completed statue; *you* marked with interest from day to day the progress of the work till the rough block, by gradual change, assumed its present form. Let me hope that it may yet be sculptured to greater symmetry and smoothness, and better deserve your lavish regard.

"The sounds and sights which greet me here are linked with thrilling associations. Among the voices which welcome me to-night I distinguish some which were raised in kind approval of my earliest efforts. Among the faces which surround this board I trace lineaments deeply stamped on my memory in that expression of benevolent encouragement with which they regarded my juvenile attempts, and cheered me onward in the outset of my career. I look on your features, sir" (said Mr. F., addressing himself to the Mayor of the city, who occupied a seat by his right), "and my mind glides over a long interval of time, to a scene I can never forget. Four lustres are now nearly completed since the event occurred to which I allude.

"A crowd was gathered one evening in the Tivoli Garden, to behold the curious varieties of delirium men exhibit on inhaling nitrous oxide. Several years had then elapsed since the great chemist of England had made known the singular properties of exhilarating gas; and strange antics performed under its influence by distinguished philosophers, poets, and statesmen of Europe were then on record. It was yet, however, a novelty

with us, and the public experiments drew throngs to witness them. Among those to whom the intoxicating agent was administered (on the occasion referred to) there chanced to be a little unfriended boy, who, in the instant ecstasy which the subtle fluid inspired, threw himself into a tragic attitude and commenced declaiming a passage from one of Shakspeare's plays. 'What, ho!' he cried, 'young Richmond, ho! 'tis Richard calls; I hate thee, Harry, for thy blood of Lancaster.' But the effect of the aerial draught was brief as it was sudden and irresistible. The boy, awaking as from a dream, was surprised to find himself the centre of attraction,—'the observed of all observers.' Abashed at his novel and awkward position, he shrunk timidly from the glances of the spectators, and would have stolen in haste away. But a stranger stepped from the crowd, and, taking him kindly by the hand, pronounced words which thrilled through him with a spell-like influence. 'This lad,' said he, 'has the germ of tragic greatness in him. The exhilarating gas has given him no new power. It has only revealed one which lay dormant in him before. It needs only to be cherished and cultivated to bring forth goodly fruit.'

"Gentlemen, the present chief magistrate of our city was that benevolent stranger, and your guest to-night was that unfriended boy. If the prophecy has been in any degree fulfilled,—if since that time I have attained some eminence in my profession,—let my full heart acknowledge that the inspiriting prediction, followed as it was with repeated acts of delicate and considerate kindness, exercised the happiest influence on the result. It was a word in season; it was a kindly greeting calculated to arouse all the energies of my nature and direct them to a particular aim. Prophecy oftentimes shapes the event which it seems only to foretell. One shout of friendly confidence at the beginning of a race may nerve the runner with strength to win the goal.

"Happy he who, on accomplishing his round, is received with generous welcome by the same friends that cheered him at the start. Among such friends I stand. You listened with inspiring praise and augury to the immature efforts of the boy, and you now honor with this proud token of your approbation the achievements of the man.

"You nurtured me in the bud and early blossom of my life,

and 'labored to make me full of growing.' If you have succeeded, 'the harvest is your own.'

"Mr. President and gentlemen, allow me to offer you, in conclusion, as my sentiment,—

"*The Citizens of Philadelphia*—Alike ready at the starting-post to cheer genius to exertion, and at the goal to reward it with a chaplet."

The newspaper reporter who described the occasion said,—

"It is not possible to convey by words any idea of the effect produced by this speech. His delivery was natural, forcible, and unaffected; and in many passages all who heard him were moved to tears. At the allusion to Colonel Swift, the Mayor of the city, the whole company rose, and, by a common impulse, gave six hearty cheers. Mr. Forrest sat down amidst the most vehement applause."

Several sentiments were read, and excellent speeches made in response. Morton McMichael ended his eloquent remarks thus:

"Before I sit down, however, allow me to call upon one whose genuine eloquence will atone for my tedious prattle. For this purpose I shall presently ask the company to join me in a health to one now near me, who, though young in years, has already secured to himself a ripe renown,—one who, in various departments of literature, has shown a vigorous and searching mind,—one who, in all the circumstances in which he has been placed, whether by prosperous or adverse fortune, has so acquitted himself, that in him

'Nature might stand up
And say to all the world, this is a man.'

I allude, sir, to the author of 'Conrad of Naples,' a tragedy which, though written in the early years of nonage, bears upon it the unmistakable impress of rich and fruitful soil. Nor is this the only thing which my friend—for I am proud to call him so—has achieved in the difficult walks of the tragic drama. His 'Jack Cade' is a fine, spirited, stirring production, full of noble sentiments, clothed in striking language; and if it could only be so fortunate as to secure for the representative of its hero our own Spartacus, its success upon the stage would be as pre-eminent as its deserts are ample. As an essayist, too, this gentleman has made himself extensively known by the energy and brilliance of

his style, the justness and solidity of his ideas, and the comprehensive range of his information. In years gone by, his contributions to the press of this city were everywhere recognized by their bold and manly eloquence; and in the gentle pursuits of the Muses he has exhibited a fervor of thought and a delicacy of expression seldom surpassed by any of our native poets. But I see, sir, that my praises are distasteful to him, and I therefore at once propose

"*Robert T. Conrad*—Distinguished alike by his success as a dramatist, his skill as a poet, and his rich, ready, and glowing eloquence."

The Hon. R. T. Conrad then addressed the company, as follows:

"To those who are acquainted with the gentleman who has just taken his seat, no act of generosity or kindness coming from him can be wholly unexpected. I will not, therefore, plead, in extenuation of my inability to return a suitable acknowledgment, the surprise which his flattering reference to me, and the still more flattering manner in which that reference was received, have excited. I may, however, regret that the excess of his kindness deprives me of the power of speaking the gratitude which it inspires,—gratitude which is only rendered more profound by a consciousness that his praises are partial and undeserved. The excitement which, when tranquil, fans and kindles expression, when turbulent, overwhelms and extinguishes it. I feel this on the present occasion. The compliment is not only beyond my ambition, but beyond my strength. It comes to me as Jupiter did to the ambitious beauty of old, consuming while it embraces. I am not, however, so completely consumed in my blushes but that enough of me is left to say to the gentleman who has done me this honor, and to the company who joined in it, that I thank him and them most sincerely.

"Mr. McMichael has alluded to my former connection with the drama. The memory of friendship alone could have retained or revived a thought of my humble association, at an earlier period of my life, with the literature of the stage. To me the recollection of those studies will ever be grateful. Even the severest and most ascetic student can have no reason to regret the time spent in the contemplation of the rich stores of the British drama.

He who has dwelt amid its glorious structures—who has had the wizard spell of its mighty masters thrown over his spirit—can never recur to it without enjoyment. Years may pass over him, and the current of life drift him far away from those pursuits, but, when recalled by an occasion like the present, he will come back to them with all his former feelings,—

> 'Feelings long subdued,
> Subdued, but cherished long.'

He will find all its haunted paths familiar to him, and the flowers that bloom around those paths as fresh and as bright as when they first sprang forth at the call of genius. Its ancient and lofty halls will ring with the old and well-known voices, and its gorgeous and grotesque creations pass before him like things of life and substance, rather than the airy nothings of the imagination. If such be its ordinary magic, how potent is the spell when the vision becomes half real; when the leaves of the drama, like the written responses of the ancient oracles, flutter with supernatural life; when the figures start from the lifeless canvas and live and move and have their being in the mighty art of a Forrest! Who that has stepped within the charmed circle traced by his wand would sell the memory of its delight?

> 'His is the spell o'er hearts
> Which only acting lends,
> The youngest of the sister arts,
> Where all their beauty blends:
> For poetry can ill express
> Full many a tone of thought sublime,
> And painting, mute and motionless,
> Steals but a glance of time.
> But by the mighty actor brought,
> Illusion's perfect triumphs come,
> Verse ceases to be airy thought,
> And sculpture to be dumb.'"

Mr. Conrad, with an allusion to the Hon. Joseph R. Chandler, gave this sentiment:

"*The Press*—The source and safeguard of social order, freedom, and refinement."

Mr. Chandler said,—

"In the concluding portion of the remarks of the gentleman

who immediately preceded me, there was an allusion to my early acquaintance with the distinguished guest of the evening. The gentleman was right, sir. I can boast a long acquaintance with our guest, and an early appreciation of those talents which have so often delighted us, and which have led their possessor to his present eminence. I was among those who witnessed the scene which has been so graphically described by the gentleman himself, and among those who, having such ample means, prophesied that success which has been attained; and I now see around me many who are gratified this evening at the full evidence of their prophecy's fulfilment.

"For more than twenty years, sir, I have had occasion to mark the progress of our guest. I hope that the new relations into which that gentleman has entered will not make offensive the unfortunate extent of my reminiscence; it includes only a part of the years of my manhood, while it extends far down into his boyhood. It extends to a time when the first bud of his professional greatness began to blow; but even then what struck his admirers as a new development could not have been new to him, —an earlier love of the profession must have begotten some consciousness of latent talent,—and when has a love of a pursuit, and a consciousness of powers to prosecute it, failed to give hopes of success? Well, sir, step by step has that gentleman ascended the ladder, until he has reached the topmost round; and now, from the proud eminence which he has attained, he invites us to look back with him, and to glory in the means whereby he did ascend. Sir, he may glory in them; and we, as his friends, may join in the felicitation. Steady and rapid as has been that ascent, there is none to complain. The hundreds of his profession whom he has passed in his upward flight have cheered him on, and rejoiced in his success, as the deservings of talent and toil. No envious actor repines at his lower station, but all feel that their profession is honored in the achievements of its most successful member.

"But, sir, I feel that the object of this delightful festival is not to reward the brilliant achievements of a performer: proud as we may be, as Philadelphians, of his success, we have a higher motive; we feel, and would by these ceremonies express, that our townsman has successfully trod a path dangerous to all, and that

green as is the chaplet which he has acquired as an actor, its beauty and redolence are derived from his virtues as a *man*. The credit of high professional excellence is awarded, and the man admired,—that in the case of our honored guest it has served to give exercise to the virtues of the citizen, the friend, and the relative.

"On another, a former occasion, I united with many citizens now here in a festival to a gentleman of eminence as an actor and of high credit as a dramatic author. I allude to Mr. Knowles. The hospitalities of the evening were acknowledged by the recipient, and were made most gratifying to those who extended them. But how different were they from those of this occasion! They lacked the interest of early associations, the sympathy of common citizenship: the fame we celebrated was great, but it was not *our own*. The occasion then was not like *this;* we come here not to be hospitable, nor to extend courtesy to a stranger. We come to express an appreciation of talent, our respects for faculties nobly but meekly borne, our gratitude for true Americanism exhibited abroad, and our appreciation of the gentleman at home,—to say to the world that even as a stranger they may applaud the actor in proportion to his deservings, because here at home, where he is fully known, the *man* is loved.

"Sir, alone and unaided has Forrest gained his present eminence, by the ascending power of talents and perseverance alone; the press has found time only to record his conquests of fame, and this festival is the *spontaneous* offering of admiring citizens to one of their number, who, in doing so much for himself, has reflected honor on them.

"The Philadelphia press, however, sir, will ever feel it a duty to find it a pleasure to encourage talents of a high order, and to promote their appreciation and reward. I speak the more confidently, as I stand among those of its directors who are concerned themselves in such a course, and who feel their responsibility in this respect to society."

Richard Penn Smith responded to a toast with much felicity. He said "he recalled with pleasure his intercourse with Mr. Forrest, for whom he wrote his tragedy entitled *Caius Marius*, but regretted that even the transcendent talents of his friend could not save his hero from perishing among the ruins of Carthage."

Mr. Smith said that "on such an occasion it would be unpardonable to overlook one who stood foremost in the ranks of our dramatic writers,—a gentleman who had distinguished himself by his various talents as an artist and an author, and whose dramatic works would ultimately secure him an enviable fame." He referred to Wm. Dunlap, of New York, and read the following letter:

"NEW YORK, December 11th, 1837.

"GENTLEMEN,—I received, on the evening of the 9th instant, your polite letter, doing me the honor of requesting my presence at a public dinner to be given to Edwin Forrest on the 15th instant. Nothing but the progress of winter, which I see around me, and feel within, could prevent my testifying in person how highly I appreciate the invitation of the committee and the gentleman to whom the public mark of esteem is to be given. Permit me to offer a toast:

"The American Actor, who, both in public and private life, upholds the honor of his country,—Edwin Forrest.

"WILLIAM DUNLAP."

"Mr. President," said Mr. Smith, "I will offer you a toast, which I have no doubt will be cordially responded to,—

"*William Dunlap*—The Nestor of the American Drama. May he live to see the edifice become what his foundation promised!"

The President called upon Mr. Charles Ingersoll, chairman of the Committee of Invitation, for a sentiment, to which Mr. Ingersoll responded:

"MR. CHAIRMAN,—I have been desired by the committee to propose the health of a gentleman who is among us,—a friend of our immediate guest,—who has left his business in a sister city to comply with their invitation to give us his presence to-day,—a gentleman well known in the department of letters, as our guest upon your right is in that of the drama, as peculiarly and characteristically American. We are met to congratulate upon his successes a man radically American. The occasion is, therefore, appropriate to the cultivation of nationality,—a virtue which, though it is said to have grown into a weed in our political and individual relations, we have never been accused of fostering overmuch in literature and the arts; and he who cultivates it

there deserves our signal approbation. Short of that illiberality which impedes the march of improvement, let us cherish a partiality, an honest, homely prejudice, for what is our own. To know ourselves is not the whole circle of wisdom; we must love ourselves too. Who sees an American audience crowd to an American play and turn from Shakspeare to call for Metamora and the Gladiator, and does not acknowledge in this fond prejudice the germ of excellence? Patriotism itself is a blind preference of our own earth; and shall there be no patriotism in letters? Take from Walter Scott his local prepossessions,—his Scotch kings, Scotch hills, Scotchmen, and the round of characters that he carries with him to all times and all places wherever his scene be laid,—deprive him, in a word, of his nationality, and what is he? Cut from his harp his own strings, and where is his music? There is no virtue without excess; such is human imperfection. Give us, then, *nationality*, which is but a phase of patriotic feeling; give us excess of it. Let us love the yet barren hills of our own literature, and we shall learn to make them wave and smile with harvests. Let our authors, like the gentleman we are about to drink to, strike their roots into their native soil and spread themselves to their native sun, and, like him, they will flourish. I propose

"A health and a hearty welcome to Mr. Leggett, whose pen, pointed by a genius that is his own, is directed by a heart that is all his country's."

Mr. Leggett said, that "to be complimented on such an occasion, and by such an assemblage, with a particular notice, was an honor to which he knew not how to reply. The courteous hospitality which made him a partaker with them in their festal ovation to his distinguished friend was an honor so far beyond his deserts as to call for his warmest acknowledgments. But 'the exchequer of the poor,' thanks alone, contained no coin which he dared offer in requital of the obligation they had conferred.

"It is often lamented" (Mr. L. remarked) "that the actor's art, though more impressive in its instant effects than painting or sculpture, stamps no enduring memorial of its excellence, and that its highest achievements soon fade from recollection, or survive only in its vague and traditionary report. This complaint did not seem to him altogether just. We best know how to esti-

mate causes from the effects they produce. The consequences of actions are their most lasting and authentic chroniclers. What portrait, or what statue, could have conveyed to us so exalted a notion of the loveliness of Helen of Troy as the ten years' war provoked by her fatal charms? What 'storied urn or animated bust' could have perpetuated the memory of Roscius like the honors bestowed on him by the Roman Senate, the eulogium of Cicero, and the tears—more eloquent than words—shed by that immortal orator upon his grave?

"When I look around me, and behold this capacious hall thronged with men eminent for station, admired for talent, and valued for various private worth, and when I reflect on the object which convenes them here, I cannot admit the peculiar perishableness of the actor's fame, I cannot admit that he merely 'struts and frets his hour upon the stage, and then is heard no more.' You have reared a monument to one actor, at least, gentlemen, which will long commemorate his greatness, and convey to your children, and your children's children, a lively impression of the genius and virtues which elicited so proud and enviable a tribute!"

Mr. Leggett returned his sincere thanks for the honor of inscribing his name on so enduring a record, and said he was proud to have it associated with the proceedings of that day.

In conclusion, he asked the company to fill their glasses to the following sentiment:

"*Philadelphia*—The Rome of the new world in this, that she has given a second Roscius to mankind, while another of her sons bids fair to win for her Athenian distinction by rivalling the fame of Æschylus."

Passing over the other speeches as of little interest now, it may be well to state that among the letters of excuse read was one from Washington Irving, regretting that it was not in his "power to join in this well-merited tribute to theatrical genius and private worth;" one from William Cullen Bryant, saying that it would give him "the greatest pleasure to unite in any testimony to the professional merit and personal worth of Mr. Forrest;" one from John P. Kennedy, who "would rejoice in such an opportunity to acknowledge his share of the indebtedness which the country at large owes to a gentleman whose fame in his profession has become common property;" and one from the cele-

brated player W. E. Burton, enclosing this happy toast: "The Stage of Life,—although cast into inferior parts at the commencement, industry and perseverance may eventually place us in the principal characters. May we be found perfect at the conclusion of the play!"

Songs and music were interspersed among the addresses, the famous vocalist Henry Russell singing several of his most exquisite ballads with unrivalled effect; and the occasion, altogether, was one of unclouded enjoyment in the passage and of lasting satisfaction in the retrospect.

Forrest now purchased a house in New York, and established his home there. He took a pew in the church of the Rev. Orville Dewey, the brilliant Unitarian divine, on whose pulpit ministrations he was for a series of years a regular attendant whenever he was in the city. The attraction of this extremely original and eloquent preacher had drawn together the most intellectual and cultivated congregation in New York; and his influence, silently and in many an unrecognized channel, has been diffusing itself ever since. The bold, rational, poetic, yet profoundly tender and devout style of thought and speech which characterized the sermons of Dewey had a great charm for Forrest, and they were never forgotten by him. He always believed in a God whose will is revealed in the laws of the material universe, and in the rightful order of human life, and he bowed in reverence at the thought of this mysterious Being, though often perplexed with doubts as to particular doctrines, and always a sworn enemy to religious dogmatism.

The next event which interrupted the regular movement of his professional and private life was the delivery of the oration at the celebration, in the city of New York, of the sixty-second anniversary of the Declaration of the Independence of the United States. The celebration was held under the auspices of the Democratic party. Party feeling was intense at the time, and to be the orator of the day on the Fourth of July, in the chief metropolis of the land, was an honor greatly coveted. The choice of Forrest showed the estimation in which he was held, while, on the other hand, his personal celebrity and magnetism lent unusual interest to the occasion. The popular desire to hear him had been fed and fanned to the highest pitch by the opposing newspaper com-

ments, called out by the singular incident of a political party selecting a tragedian as their orator. The services were held in the old Broadway Tabernacle. Five thousand tickets of admission had been given out, but the multitude rushed resistlessly in, regardless of tickets, till the enormous building was stuffed to suffocation. The oration, in its sentiments, its style, its delivery, was extraordinarily successful. It was hailed with the most extravagant admiration and praise. In thought and feeling it was really creditable to its author, but its fervid rhetorical sentences and popular temper were so exactly suited to the tastes of those who heard it, that their estimate of its literary rank and philosophic value was stimulated to a level that must seem amusing to any sober judge of such things. The author's own opinion of it was modest enough, as appeared in the apologetic preface he prefixed to it when published. Yet it expressed his honest convictions and those of his auditors with so much picturesque vigor, and those convictions were so generous and so genuinely American, that the popularity of the oration was no matter of wonder. It was printed in full in numerous journals, and many thousands of copies in pamphlet form were distributed. Two or three extracts from it are appended, to serve as specimens of its quality and indications of the mind and heart of the author.

"Fellow-Citizens,—We are met this day to celebrate the most august event which ever constituted an epoch in the political annals of mankind. The ordinary occasions of public festivals and rejoicings lie at an infinite depth below that which convenes us here. We meet not in honor of a victory achieved on the crimson field of war; not to triumph in the acquisitions of rapine; nor to commemorate the accomplishment of a vain revolution which but substituted one dynasty of tyrants for another. No glittering display of military pomp and pride, no empty pageant of regal grandeur, allures us hither. We come not to daze our eyes with the lustre of a diadem, placed, with all its attributes of tremendous power, on the head of a being as weak, as blind, as mortal as ourselves. We come not to celebrate the birthday of a despot, but the birthday of a nation; not to bow down in senseless homage before a throne founded on the prostrate rights of man, but to stand erect in the conscious dignity of equal freedom and join our voices in the loud acclaim now swelling from

the grateful hearts of fifteen millions of men in acknowledgment of the glorious charter of liberty our fathers this day proclaimed to the world.

"How simple, how sublime, is the occasion of our meeting! This vast assemblage is drawn together to solemnize the anniversary of an event which appeals not to their senses nor to their passions, but to their reason; to triumph at a victory, not of might, but of right; to rejoice in the establishment, not of physical dominion, but of an abstract proposition. We are met to celebrate the declaration of that inestimable principle which asserts the political equality of mankind. We are met in honor of the promulgation of that charter by which we are recognized as joint sovereigns of an empire of freemen; holding our sovereignty by a right indeed divine,—the immutable, eternal, irresistible right of self-evident truth. We are met, fellow-citizens, to commemorate the laying of the corner-stone of democratic liberty.

"Threescore years and two have now elapsed since our fathers ventured on the grand experiment of freedom. The nations of the earth heard with wonder the startling principle they asserted, and watched the progress of their enterprise with doubt and apprehension. The heart of the political philanthropist throbbed with anxiety for the result; the down-trodden victims of oppression scarce dared to lift their eyes in hope of a successful termination, while they knew that failure would more strongly rivet their chains; and the despots of the Old World, from their 'bad eminences,' gloomily looked on, aghast with rage and terror, and felt that a blow had been struck which loosened the foundation of their thrones.

"The event illustrates what ample cause there was for the prophetic tremors which thrilled to the soul of arbitrary power. Time has stamped the attestation of its signet on the success of the experiment, and the fabric then erected now stands on the strong basis of established truth, the mark and model of the world. The vicissitudes of threescore years, while they have shaken to the centre the artificial foundations of other governments, have but demonstrated the solidity of the simple and natural structure of democratic freedom. The lapse of time, while it dims the light of false systems, has continually aug-

mented the brightness of that which glows with the inherent and eternal lustre of reason and justice. New stars, from year to year, emerging with perfect radiance in the western horizon, have increased the benignant splendor of that constellation which now shines the political guiding light of the world.

"How grand in their simplicity are the elementary propositions on which our edifice of freedom is erected! A few brief, self-evident axioms furnish the enduring basis of political institutions which harmoniously accomplish all the legitimate purposes of government to fifteen millions of people. The natural equality of man; the right of a majority to govern; their duty so to govern as to preserve inviolate the sacred obligations of equal justice, with no end in view but the protection of life, property, and social order, leaving opinion free as the wind which bloweth where it listeth: these are the plain, eternal principles on which our fathers reared that temple of true liberty beneath whose dome their children congregate this day to pour out their hearts in gratitude for the precious legacy. Yes! on the everlasting rock of truth the shrine is founded where we worship freedom; and

> 'When the sweeping storm of time
> Has sung its death-dirge o'er the ruined fanes
> And broken altars of the mighty fiend
> Whose name usurps her honors, and the blood,
> Through centuries clotted there, has floated down
> The tainted flood of ages,'—

that shrine shall stand, unshaken by the beating surge of change, and only washed to purer whiteness by the deluge that overwhelms all other political fabrics.

"To the genius of Bacon the world is indebted for emancipating philosophy from the subtleties of the schoolmen, and placing her securely on the firm basis of ascertained elementary truth, thence to soar the loftiest flights on the unfailing pinions of induction and analogy. To the genius of Jefferson—to the comprehensive reach and fervid patriotism of his mind—we owe a more momentous obligation. What Bacon did for natural science, Jefferson did for political morals, that important branch of ethics which most directly affects the happiness of all mankind. He snatched the art of government from the hands that had enveloped it in sophisms and mysteries that it might be made an instrument to

oppress the many for the advantage of the few. He stripped it of the jargon by which the human mind had been deluded into blind veneration for kings as the immediate vicegerents of God on earth; and proclaimed in words of eloquent truth, which thrilled conviction to every heart, those eternal self-evident first principles of justice and reason on which alone the fabric of government should be reared. He taught those 'truths of power in words immortal' you have this day heard; words which bear the spirit of great deeds; words which have sounded the death-dirge of tyranny to the remotest corners of the earth; which have roused a sense of right, a hatred of oppression, an intense yearning for democratic liberty, in myriads of myriads of human hearts; and which, reverberating through time like thunder through the sky, will,

'in the distance far away,
Wake the slumbering ages.'

"To Jefferson belongs exclusively and forever the high renown of having framed the glorious charter of American liberty. This was the grandest experiment ever undertaken in the history of man. But they that entered upon it were not afraid of new experiments, if founded on the immutable principles of right and approved by the sober convictions of reason. There were not wanting then, indeed, as there are not wanting now, pale counsellors to fear, who would have withheld them from the course they were pursuing, because it tended in a direction hitherto untrod. But they were not to be deterred by the shadowy doubts and timid suggestions of craven spirits, content to be lashed forever round the same circle of miserable expedients, perpetually trying anew the exploded shifts which had always proved lamentably inadequate before. To such men the very name of experiment is a sound of horror. It is a spell which conjures up gorgons, hydras, and chimeras dire. They seem not to know that all that is valuable in life—that the acquisitions of learning, the discoveries of science, and the refinements of art—are the result of experiment. It was experiment that bestowed on Cadmus those keys of knowledge with which we unlock the treasure-houses of immortal mind. It was experiment that taught Bacon the futility of the Grecian philosophy, and led him to that heaven-scaling method of investigation and analysis on which science

has safely climbed to the proud eminence where now she sits, dispensing her blessings on mankind. It was experiment that lifted Newton above the clouds and darkness of this visible diurnal sphere, enabling him to explore the sublime mechanism of the stars and weigh the planets in their eternal rounds. It was experiment that nerved the hand of Franklin to snatch the thunder from the armory of heaven. It was experiment that gave this hemisphere to the world. It was experiment that gave this continent to freedom.

"Let us not be afraid, then, to try experiments merely because they are new, nor lavish upon aged error the veneration due only to truth. Let us not be afraid to follow reason, however far she may diverge from the beaten path of opinion. All the inventions which embellish life, all the discoveries which enlarge the field of human happiness, are but various results of the bold experimental exercise of that distinguishing attribute of man. It was the exercise of reason that taught our sires those simple elements of freedom on which they founded their stupendous structure of empire. The result is now before mankind, not in the embryo form of doubtful experiment; not as the mere theory of visionary statesmen, or the mad project of hot-brained rebels: it is before them in the beautiful maturity of established fact, attested by sixty-two years of national experience, and witnessed throughout its progress by an admiring world! Where does the sun, in all his compass, shed his beams on a country freer, better, happier than this? Where does he behold more diffused prosperity, more active industry, more social harmony, more abiding faith, hope, and charity? Where are the foundations of private right more stable, or the limits of public order more inviolately observed? Where does labor go to his toil with an alerter step, or an erecter brow, effulgent with the heart-reflected light of conscious independence? Where does agriculture drive his team a-field with a more cheery spirit, in the certain assurance that the harvest is his own? Where does commerce launch more boldly her bark upon the deep, aware that she has to strive but with the tyranny of the elements, and not with the more appalling tyranny of man?

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"The day is past forever when religion could have feared the

consequences of freedom. In what other land do so many heaven-pointing spires attest the devotional habits of the people? In what other land is the altar more faithfully served, or its fires kept burning with a steadier lustre? Yet the temples in which we worship are not founded on the violated rights of conscience, but erected by willing hands; the creed we profess is not dictated by arbitrary power, but is the spontaneous homage of our hearts; and religion, viewing the prodigious concourse of her voluntary followers, has reason to bless the auspicious influence of democratic liberty and universal toleration. She has reason to exclaim, in the divine language of Milton, 'though all the winds of doctrine were let loose to play upon the earth, so truth be in the field, we do injuriously, by licensing and prohibiting, to misdoubt her strength. Let her and falsehood grapple! for who ever knew truth put to the worse in a free and open encounter? Her confuting is the best and surest suppressing.' The soundness of this glorious text of religious liberty has now been approved to the world by the incontestable evidence of our national experience, since it is one of those 'columns of true majesty' on which our political fabric stands. Let bigotry and intolerance turn their lowering eyes to our bright example, and learn the happy, thrice happy consequences, both to politics and religion, from placing an insuperable bar to that incestuous union, from which, in other lands, such a direful brood of error's monstrous shapes have sprung.

"It is one of the admirable incidents of democracy, that it tends, with a constant influence, to equalize the external condition of man. Perfect equality, indeed, is not within the reach of human effort.

> 'Order is heaven's first law, and, this confest,
> Some are and must be greater than the rest,—
> More rich, more wise.'

"Strength must ever have an advantage over weakness; sagacity over simplicity; wisdom over ignorance. This is according to the ordination of nature, and no institutions of man can repeal the decree. But the inequality of society is greater than the inequality of nature; because it has violated the first principle of justice, which nature herself has inscribed on the heart,—the equality, not of physical or intellectual condition, but of moral

rights. Let us then hasten to retrace our steps wherein we have strayed from this golden rule of democratic government. This only is wanting to complete the measure of our national felicity.

"There is no room to fear that persuasion to this effect, though urged with all the power of logic and all the captivating arts of rhetoric, by lips more eloquent than those which address you now, will lead too suddenly to change. Great changes in social institutions, even of acknowledged errors, cannot be instantly accomplished without endangering those boundaries of private right which ought to be held inviolate and sacred. Hence it happily arises that the human mind entertains a strong reluctance to violent transitions, not only where the end is doubtful, but where it is clear as the light of day and beautiful as the face of truth; and it is only when the ills of society amount to tyrannous impositions that this aversion yields to a more powerful incentive of conduct. Then leaps the sword of revolution from its scabbard, and a passage to reformation is hewn out through blood. But how blest is our condition, that such a resort can never be needed! 'Peace on earth, and good will among men,' are the natural fruits of our political system. The gentle weapon of suffrage is adequate for all the purposes of freemen. From the armory of opinion we issue forth in coat of mail more impenetrable than ever cased the limbs of warrior on the field of sanguinary strife. Our panoply is of surest proof, for it is supplied by reason. Armed with the ballot, a better implement of warfare than sword of the 'icebrook's temper,' we fight the sure fight, relying with steadfast faith on the intelligence and virtue of the majority to decide the victory on the side of truth. And should error for awhile carry the field by his stratagems, his opponents, though defeated, are not destroyed: they rally again to the conflict, animated with the strong assurance of the ultimate prevalence of right.

'Truth crushed to earth shall rise again;
The eternal years of God are hers;
But error wounded writhes in pain,
And dies among his worshippers.'

"What bounds can the vision of the human mind descry to the spread of American greatness, if we but firmly adhere to those first

principles of government, which have already enabled us, in the infancy of national existence, to vie with the proudest of the century-nurtured states of Europe? The Old World is cankered with the diseases of political senility and cramped by the long-worn fetters of tyrannous habit. But the empire of the West is in the bloom and freshness of being. Its heart is unseared by the prejudices of 'damned custom;' its intellect unclouded by the sophisms of ages. From its borders, kissed by the waves of the Atlantic, to

> 'The continuous woods
> Where rolls the Oregon and hears no sound
> Save his own dashing;'

from the inland oceans of the North, to the sparkling surface of the tropical sea, rippled by breezes laden with the perfumes of eternal summer, our vast theatre of national achievement extends. What a course is here for the grand race of democratic liberty! Within these limits a hundred millions of fellow-beings may find ample room and verge enough to spread themselves and grow up to their natural eminence. With a salubrious clime to invigorate them with health, and a generous soil to nourish them with food; with the press—that grand embalmer not of the worthless integuments of mortality, but of the offsprings of immortal mind—to diffuse its vivifying and ennobling influences over them; with those admirable results of inventive genius to knit them together, by which space is deprived of its power to bar the progress of improvement and dissipate the current of social amity; with a political faith which acknowledges as its fundamental maxim the golden rule of Christian ethics, 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you;' with these means, and the constantly-increasing dignity of character which results from independence, what bounds can be set to the growth of American greatness? A hundred millions of happy people! A hundred millions of co-sovereigns, recognizing no law but the recorded will of a majority; no end of law but mutual and equal good; no superior but God alone!"

The keen admiration for Forrest prevalent among the democratic masses had already led to frequent suggestions of him as a candidate for political honors. His appointment as orator quickened the scent of friends and foes in this direction. In the

public prints the thought of his nomination was advocated by some and satirized by others. The following paragraph gives a glimpse into the life of the time:

"There is talk of sending our tragedian to Washington, to act a real part on the political stage. By all means. Look at the play-writers in Parliament,—Sheridan, Bulwer, Shiel, Talfourd! Our friend Knowles is spoken of for a seat in the Commons. Why not Forrest? Down with all illiberality, we say, in such matters. Let Forrest have a seat in Congress. We like variety. And in these dog-days we like a little frolic and fun, and insist upon a thundering audience for the oration to begin with, and then we will clear the way for the Congressional election. But fair and softly: what are we to do with his friend Leggett? They cannot be separated: they must go together, like two figs in a jar. If Forrest has a seat in Congress, Leggett must have a stool near him. He can have a seat like a delegate, you know, from a Territory, having a voice but no vote. We can manage that. He can go from Coney Island without opposition, and it is essentially necessary that he should go. Suppose Forrest should break down in a speech on the Northeastern boundary, on the currency, on the Western land interests, or on any other great constitutional or legal question, he has only to turn round to his friend and say, in that remarkably silver voice of his, '*York, you are wanted!*'"

Some scurrilous spirits charged that the oration delivered by Forrest was not his own composition, but was furnished by his friend Leggett. Leggett immediately published a point-blank denial, and affirmed that he had nothing whatever to do with it. In a short time the anticipated move was made; and, after careful consideration, it received the following reply:

"PHILADELPHIA, Oct. 17th, 1838.

"TO GEORGE SEAMAN, JOHH A. MORRILL AND EDMUND J. PORTER.

"GENTLEMEN,—The circular letter addressed to me by you as Chairman and Secretaries of the New York Democratic Republican Nominating Committee for nominating Representatives to Congress, reached me just as I was leaving the city, and I embrace the earliest moment of leisure since my arrival here to write you in reply.

"To the first question proposed by the Nominating Committee, I take great pleasure in returning an affirmative answer. The complete separation of the political affairs of the country from the private interests of trade, and especially from those of corporate banking institutions, I regard as a consummation greatly to be desired by every friend of popular government and of the equal rights of man. I have already, on a recent public occasion, expressed my sentiments on this subject, in general terms indeed, but with an earnestness which, in some measure, may have evinced how deeply-seated is my dread of the selfish and encroaching spirit of traffic, and of the aristocratic character and tendency of chartered monopolies, wielding, almost without responsibility, the fearful instrument of associated wealth. Not only do I approve most cordially the plan of the administration for an independent treasury, and the separation of Bank and State, but fervently do I hope that the same democratic principles of legislation may guide the action of every member of the confederacy until, at no distant day, the last link shall be sundered which now, in any portion of this republic, holds the general and equal good of the community in fatal subserviency to the sordid interests of a few.

"To the first branch of your second question, also, I respond in the affirmative; and so strong is my desire for the success of those measures in support of which the Democracy is now contending, that, although my professional engagements will call me, at the time of the election, to a distance from the city of New York, I shall not let a very considerable pecuniary sacrifice deter me from visiting it during the three days, that my ballot may swell the majority which, I trust, the Democracy of the metropolis of the Empire State will give on the side of those contested principles which seem to me to lie at the very foundation of popular liberty and to be essential to the permanency of our political fabric.

"But to your last inquiry,—while impressed with a lively sense of gratitude to those who have deemed my name worthy to be placed among the number from which you are to select persons to discharge the important duty of representatives to the national legislature,—I am constrained to offer you a negative reply.

"It was intimated to me, when I was honored with an invita-

tion to pronounce an address before the Democracy of New York on the late Anniversary of our Independence, that my name might possibly be afterwards put in nomination on the list of candidates for Congress. While I consented, promptly and cheerfully, to deliver the oration, I at the same time explicitly disclaimed any ulterior views. The duties of legislation, I thought, could not be adequately discharged without more preparatory study and reflection than I had yet found time to bestow upon the subject, and I felt unwilling to owe to the misjudging partiality of my fellow-citizens an honor due to the merits of some worthier man, as sincere in the cause of Democracy as myself, and more able to do it service. My plans had also been arranged to pursue my present profession for a few years longer, during which time I hoped that the sedulous devotion of my leisure to political study and observation might render me more capable, should I hereafter be called to any public trust, of filling it with credit to myself and advantage to the community. These are the views which I expressed in reply to the committee by whom I was invited to deliver an oration on the Fourth of July; and by these views my mind continues to be swayed. I therefore, gratefully acknowledging the partial kindness of that estimate of my talents and character which placed my name before you, respectfully decline being a candidate for nomination.

"With much consideration,

"I have the honor to be, etc.,

"EDWIN FORREST."

The "Broker of Bogota" was in many respects the most meritorious of all the prize-plays elicited by Forrest. It was written by Robert Montgomery Bird, but was of a wholly different order from his other tragedies. Brought out first in 1834 with marked success, it had been suffered to lie in neglect for some time, both because of the difficulty of finding satisfactory performers for the secondary parts in it, and because the piece, while especially admired by refined and cultivated judges, lacked those showy scenes and exciting points which attract the crowd. But it was ever a particular favorite with Forrest himself, who always delighted to play it, and always spoke of it with enthusiasm and with deep regret that it was so much too fine for his average

audiences that he was obliged largely to lay it aside for noisier and more glaring performances with not one tithe of its merit. Having taken unwearied pains to perfect himself even to the very minutest details in the representation of the title-rôle, he now reproduced this play, and continued occasionally to repeat it, wherever he felt confident of an appreciative audience, up to his last year upon the stage. In the series of plays with which the name of Forrest is identified, this one is of so unique a character that we must try to give some distinctive idea of it; though it is difficult to do so.

The great passions of patriotism, liberty, ambition, revenge, public spirit and enterprise, with their imposing accompaniments of conflict and spectacle, are wholly absent from the piece. And yet it was written expressly for Forrest, and by one who knew him in his inmost peculiarities. And, despite the seeming strangeness of the assertion, he never appeared in a part better fitted to his true being. It is a purely domestic drama, a drama of individual and family affections and trials. Its delineation was a dissection of the human heart in its most common and familiar elements, only carried by circumstances to an extreme intensity.

Baptista Febro is an old man doing a large business in Bogota as a banker, conveyancer, money-lender, and legatee. He is widely known and respected for his ability and his scrupulous integrity; he is honest, frank, and humble to his employers; nevertheless imperative in his family, though just and kind. The two pre-eminent passions which dominate him are his personal honor and his parental affection. His daughter Leonor is devotedly attached to her father; but his son Ramon is a dissipated and ungrateful youth, whose vicious ways cause the old man the keenest anguish. Febro turns his son away and refuses him support, hoping by the consequent distress to lead him to repentance and reformation. His heart torn with anxiety and bleeding with wounded love, he watches for some signal of improvement or some overture for reconciliation from his prodigal boy; but in vain. Ramon meanwhile, who is more weak than wicked, is the helpless tool of an abandoned young noble, Caberero, whom he has taken for a friend. Caberero is a cool, dashing villain, utterly without conscience or fear, a brilliant and hardened scoundrel, who fairly illuminates with his lurid deviltry

every scene in which he appears. Febro, learning these facts, sends for Caberero and has a personal interview with him. He first attempts to hire Caberero to give up his intimacy with Ramon and leave the young man in freedom to follow the promptings of his own better nature and the solicitations of his father. The contrast of the invulnerable insolence of the rascal, his shameless betrayal of his own unprincipled character and habits, with the earnest affection and simple sincerity and honorable concern which agitated the old man, was a moral lesson of the strongest kind, set in a dramatic picture of the finest art. Then, finding all efforts at persuasion useless, the scorn and indignation of the righteous man and the injured father gradually mount in his blood till they break out in a paralyzing explosion of gesture and speech. Towering in the grandeur of his own moral passion, and backed by that dynamic atmosphere of public opinion which invisibly enspheres the good man pitted against the scoundrel, the broker makes the noble cower and flee before the storm of his angry contempt.

Ramon is slowly driven to desperation by his vices and their natural fruits. Caberero, malignantly resenting the denunciation and disdain of Febro, resolves to break into his vaults and rob him of his deposits. With diabolical ingenuity he entangles Ramon in the plot. They succeed, and arrange matters so that it seems as if the robbery were a pretence and a fraud on the part of the broker himself. He is brought before the viceroy, accused, and condemned. Deprived of his property, of his son, and, above all of his honor, the unhappy old man is almost crushed; yet his consciousness of virtue sustains him, and his bearing in the presence of the real culprits and his deceived judges, marked by every sign and attribute of conscious rectitude as he appeals to God for his final vindication, is a most impressive revelation of human nature in a scene of extraordinary trial. Meanwhile, the shame and grief of Febro are topped by a new calamity. Tidings are brought him that his daughter has eloped, and that he is left desolate indeed. But now Juanna, the betrothed of Ramon, who believes Febro incapable of the dishonor charged on him, meets the young man and denounces him for not defending his father. He tells her the facts of the case. Amazed at such baseness, her conscience treads their troth under foot, and she spurns the

hideous criminal, and flies to the viceroy to vindicate Febro. There she finds the broker searching for his daughter. Her story is told and verified. The joy and gratitude and noble pride of the old man at the removal of the stigma from his name made an exquisite moral climax. Then it is also announced to him that his daughter is not lost, but is the honorable wife of the son of the viceroy. This delightful surprise breaks on his previous pleasure like a new morn risen on mid-noon. But, alas, his hapless and guilty Ramon,—where is he? What dreadful fate awaits him? At this moment a messenger enters with the statement that Ramon, in a revulsion of remorse and despair, had committed suicide by precipitating himself from a cliff. The sudden reversal of emotion in the already over-tried Febro is too much; it snaps the last chord. As if struck in the brain with an invisible but deadly blow, he gazes first wildly, then vacantly, around, stretches out his hands in a piteous gesture of supplication, staggers, and falls lifeless on the floor.

To those who thought of Forrest as heaving the most ponderous bar and fitted only for the rugged characters of the gymnastic school, his impersonation of the "Broker of Bogota" was a surprise. There were no sensational adjuncts in it, no roll of drum, gaudy procession, or drawing of swords,—nothing but the naked, simple drama of real life in its familiar course. But he never exhibited a more perfect piece of professional workmanship. His portraiture of the business dealings between the upright and courteous old broker and his varied customers,—the torturing struggle of his sense of justice and his parental affection,—the withering curse in which his pent agony burst on the sneering villain in whom he saw the spoiler of his boy,—the heart-rending wail with which he sorrowed over the sinfulness of his darling, "Would to Heaven he had never been born!"—the alternating crisis of suspense and fulfilment as the plot proceeds through gloom and gleam of crime and innocence to the last awful climax, where the mystery is transferred from time and human judgment through despair and death into eternity and to the unknown tribunal there,—all were represented with the almost microscopic fidelity of a pre-Raphaelite picture. Nothing seemed wanting, nothing seemed superfluous. Every tone, every glance, every gesture, every step, contributed towards shaping out the ideal.

The performance bore the impress of a study as close and patient as that given to a household scene in the masterpieces of the Dutch school of painting. But to appreciate it as it deserved there was required an audience of psychologists, critically interested in the study of human nature, and curious as to its modes of individual manifestation. The general multitude must feel it to be rather dull and tiresome. It was in this respect like the "La Civile Morte" of Salvini, which, though perhaps his most absolutely perfect piece of acting in its minute truth, was yet felt by many to be tedious,—by the few to be most marvellous in its fascination.

One of the most striking examples of the skill and power of Forrest as an artist is given in the distinction he always made in his rendering of old age as seen respectively in Richelieu, in Lear, and in Febro. How does he translate the wily craft, the pitilessness, the mocking tenderness, of the first of these? He does it in so just and human a manner, with so little of that blunt and electrizing power which he displays in some other parts, that one who had not seen him in Lear would be disposed to believe this his greatest representation of age. The broken yet gigantic power of the old Lear in his fearful malediction of Goneril is overwhelming, and gives a new idea of the possible force of an aged and almost worn-out man. Lear is savagely straightforward and honest. In the first scenes he sweeps the spectators along with him in his passion and his rage. When maddened by the injuries of his unnatural children, he still is artful and clear. His very actions are unmistakable indications of his thoughts, and the last scene of the tragedy deserves to stand alone as a picture of suffering age in which past energy and passion spasmodically assert themselves. Let this be contrasted with the half-simulated decadence of Richelieu's powers. One feels from the very manner of the artist that this is but partially real,—that a moment of success may kindle into new life the man prostrated by bodily weakness. It comes, and for the moment he looms before us, as if recreated by the success of the intrigue which makes him again the genuine king of France. Very different from Richelieu and from Lear is the portrait Forrest gave of Febro. Here we have hale and honorable age, plain, sincere, outspoken. There is nothing of the jocularly-dissembling craft of the cardinal,—

nothing of the ferocious passion of the discrowned monarch; but all of the self-respect and candid bearing of an honorable servant, the deep affection and authority of a father, and the impulsiveness of a strong, genuine man. It is a more modest histrionic picture, none the less true because less majestic.

The reader will be pleased to peruse the following genial critique on Forrest as the "Broker of Bogota" from the pen of an unnamed but reflective and tasteful writer, who first saw the play in Washington in 1864:

"We are glad that we have seen Forrest in the 'Broker of Bogota.' His rendering of this conception has given us a nearer and a warmer view of him. In this impersonation he puts off the armor of sternness and inflexibility, and lets us into the world of a *heart* in which there are green arbors clad with sweet flowers, where lingering sunlight wanders and happy birds sing. Right glad are we that we have seen this picture of Forrest, for it has an eloquent breath for our common humanity. It has given us a glimpse of *his* nature which long ago we should have rejoiced to see revealed, but whose richness we dreamed not was there. What a volume is a man's life! The heart's story,—always going on, always deepening the great drama of our being as it progresses to the mortal act,—this story, in a strong inveterate nature, writes in the public bearing and in all the features that falsehood as to his sensibilities which the dreadful pen of pride alone engraves. But we do not complain because the proud man *in the conflict* wears this covering of steel. In a mortal struggle with the world it is often his only safety. Heaven help the weak who falter and fall among the soft valleys of the heart when there are fastnesses of strength to scale! We are told of victims fatally poisoned by the breath of a flower whose fragrance floats at the base of a mountain where it strikes its roots. That lost one, suffocated by perfume, and that mountain, emblem of endurance and strength, are fit types of the thought we would convey. But then we do *not* love that any man who towers in influence above his fellows shall go thus to the grave!—that, like Byron, for example, he shall live in posterity shamed by a record which is a libel upon the romance of his soul, and written, too, by his own deathless genius. It is for this reason that we are glad to have seen Forrest as the 'Broker of Bogota.' Here he uplifts the veil,

tears away the mask, and exhibits the tenderness which, like a deep vein of gold, is intermixed with the iron in the mine where his intellect sinks the shaft. Forrest, all of him, his virtues and his faults, is an American product. He is no common man. His power has a wider range than is given to that of the mere actor. This is evident from the fact that all over the nation he elicits the warmth of the partisan. His friends love him as men love a leader. His enemies, we think, do not understand him. If apology, therefore, be needed, thus we have given it for this somewhat personal criticism. We regard the Broker as Forrest's masterpiece. In it there are vehement power, flexibility, tenderness, sensibility, and all the light and shade which belong to our full humanity. The story of the play is the love of an honest, haughty, avaricious, fond old man for an erring son, whom he seeks to redeem from dissipation and bad friends. It is the love of the father for his boy, compared to which his coffers of gold become as dross in his sight,—always peeping with the eyes of a dove from the ark of the old man's heart, waiting for the deluge of evil passions to subside in his child, that the olive-branch may be wafted to him,—it is this love, sublime in forgiveness, ample for protection, and which at last breaks his heart, that is so painted here by the player as to make a dramatic movement of which Shakspeare might have been the author. And it is this which we have called *the poem of Forrest's heart.* A man of his intractable mould could not thus simulate. There is a limit to that sort of power which art cannot pass. In every detail this picture is so tenderly toned, so livingly brought from the canvas, that it must be a *real* revelation."

Another new part which Forrest in 1838 essayed with good success was that of Claude Melnotte, in the brilliant and popular play of "The Lady of Lyons," by Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton. Forrest, never having seen the play performed, created his rôle afresh, and was the first actor who ever represented it in America. This drama, as is well known to the theatrical and reading world, is rich in eloquent language and in the varied movement and surprises of its plot, shifting from the still life of the peasant class to the pomp and clang of court and camp. The hero is the son of a poor gardener, who, in his humble garb and lot, has a soul full of poetry and aspiration. He falls in love with the

proud Pauline Deschapelles, and writes to her impassioned verses, which she scorns as coming from one so much beneath her in station. Claude, half maddened, assumes the dress and rank of the Prince of Como, and wooes and wins and weds her. Then, revealing his true name and person, he enlists in the army, goes to the wars, fights his way to an illustrious renown and the baton of a marshal, returns, and wooes and wins his bride anew. The whole character and the motives of its situations differ most widely from all the parts in which Forrest had gained his celebrity as an actor; and his friends shook their heads with doubt when he proposed to attempt so novel and foreign a part. But his intelligence and art proved quite competent to the undertaking. The transformation he underwent, as shown by his picture when costumed for the character, is a surprising evidence of his true dramatic faculty. Instead of the weighty tragedian, whose Romanesque stateliness and volcanic fire filled out the ideals of Virginius, Brutus, Spartacus, he became a gay and ardent Frenchman, elastic with ambitious hope and love. The ponderous gave way to the romantic, declamation to conversational ease, monotone to graceful variety. The wooing breathed the music of sincerity, the tones of martial pride rang like a trumpet, and the gorgeous diction of the speeches never had better justice done to it. A judicious critic of that day said, "We were never before so astonished as at the real, genuine triumph of Forrest in Claude Melnotte,—a part we had imagined so utterly unsuited to his genius. He made many points of the most effective excellence; one, for example, was in reading over the letter of Bauseant twice, the first time in a rapid, half-conscious, half-trusting manner, the second time in a slow, careful, and soliloquizing style. Nothing could be more natural than this. But we cannot do justice to the acting, as a whole, in any words at our command. It was in conception thoroughly studied and yet easy, consistently wrought out, beautiful from beginning to end, from the tender enveloping of the form of Pauline in his cloak to the calm and respectful lifting from the table of the marriage settlement. The critic who can harshly ridicule such a sincere and remarkable performance must have in his nature something bitterly hostile to the actor." Yet it must be confessed, however well the art of Forrest overcame the difficulties of the rôle, it was not one really suited to

the spontaneities of his nature. The satire of his prejudiced censors stung him more than the average approval gratified him, and the performance was year by year less frequently repeated, and finally was dropped. Still, there were in it many passages exemplifying the high mission of the drama to refresh, to teach, and to uplift those who submit themselves to its influence, when an eloquent interpreter with contagious tones breathes glorious sentiments in charming words. For instance, what a heavenly revelation and longing must be given by this speech to souls of imaginative tenderness chafing under the grim realities of care and hate and neglect!

"Nay, dearest, nay, if thou wouldst have me paint
The home to which, could Love fulfil its prayers,
This hand would lead thee, listen!—A deep vale,
Shut out by Alpine hills from the rude world;
Near a clear lake, margined by fruits of gold
And whispering myrtles; glassing softest skies,
As cloudless, save with rare and roseate shadows,
As I would have thy fate!
A palace lifting to eternal summer
Its marble walls, from out a glossy bower
Of coolest foliage musical with birds,
Whose songs should syllable thy name! At noon
We'd sit beneath the arching vines, and wonder
Why Earth could be unhappy, while the heavens
Still left us youth and love! We'd have no friends
That were not lovers; no ambition, save
To excel them all in love; we'd have no books
That were not tales of love,—that we might smile
To think how poorly eloquence of words
Translates the poetry of hearts like ours!
And when night came, amidst the breathless heavens
We'd guess what star should be our home when love
Becomes immortal; while the perfumed light
Stole through the mists of alabaster lamps,
And every air was heavy with the sighs
Of orange-groves, and music from sweet lutes,
And murmurs of low fountains that gush forth
I' the midst of roses!—Dost thou like the picture?"

And how, to any susceptible nature not yet deadened with prosaic conceit, veneered with supercilious knowingness, such a strain as this, livingly expressed on the stage, would reveal the superiority of faith and affection to the grinding strifes of material

rivalry, and open that celestial world of the ideal wherein the pauper may be a millionaire, the drudge an emperor!

> "Pauline, by pride angels have fallen ere thy time: by pride—
> That sole alloy of thy most lovely mould—
> The evil spirit of a bitter love,
> And a revengeful heart, had power upon thee.
> From my first years, my soul was filled with thee:
> I saw thee midst the flowers the lowly boy
> Tended, unmarked by thee,—a spirit of bloom,
> And joy, and freshness, as if Spring itself
> Were made a living thing, and wore thy shape!
> I saw thee, and the passionate heart of man
> Entered the breast of the wild-dreaming boy;
> And from that hour I grew—what to the last
> I shall be—thine adorer! Well,—this love,
> Vain, frantic, guilty, if thou wilt, became
> A fountain of ambition, and a bright hope;
> I thought of tales that by the winter hearth
> Old gossips tell,—how maidens sprung from kings
> Have stooped from their high sphere; how Love, like Death,
> Levels all ranks, and lays the shepherd's crook
> Beside the sceptre. Thus I made my home
> In the soft palace of a fairy Future!
> My father died; and I, the peasant-born,
> Was my own lord. Then did I seek to rise
> Out of the prison of my mean estate,
> And, with such jewels as the exploring Mind
> Brings from the caves of Knowledge, buy my ransom
> From those twin gaolers of the daring heart,—
> Low Birth and iron Fortune. Thy bright image,
> Glassed in my soul, took all the hues of glory,
> And lured me on to those inspiring toils
> By which man masters men! For thee I grew
> A midnight student o'er the dreams of sages!
> For thee I sought to borrow from each Grace,
> And every Muse, such attributes as lend
> Ideal charms to Love. I thought of thee,
> And Passion taught me poesy,—of thee,
> And on the painter's canvas grew the life
> Of beauty!—Art became the shadow
> Of the dear starlight of thy haunting eyes!"

In such examples the speaker behind the footlights becomes a more thrilling preacher in a more genial pulpit, and teaches, for whoever will heed, the most precious lessons in our existence.

The tragedy of "Jack Cade, the Bondman of Kent," was writ-

ten by Robert T. Conrad, who, in a prefatory note, acknowledges his "indebtedness to the judgment and taste of Mr. Forrest in its preparation for the stage," and ascribes "its flattering success at home and abroad to the eminent genius of that unrivalled tragedian." Conrad took the name of the despised rebel, cleared it of the odium and calumny with which four hundred years of fierce prejudice had encrusted it, and presented the notorious insurrectionary leader not as a vulgar demagogue and a brutal leveller, but as an avenging patriot, who felt the wrongs of the down-trodden masses and animated them to assert their rights. In place of Jack Cade the coarse and contemptible upstart pictured in Shakspeare, Conrad paints the portrait of Jack Cade the great English democrat of the fourteenth century. He held that there were good grounds in historic truth for this view; and, at all events, it was the only view of the character which his sympathies could embrace and shape to his purpose of producing a play at once suited to the personality of Forrest as an actor and constituting an impassioned argument for democracy. The tragedy is all on fire with democratic conviction and passion. It breathes throughout the most intense feeling of the wrongs and claims of the oppressed common people. It is a sort of battle-song of liberty, written in blood and set to music. If a poetic license, it was a generous one, thus to attempt to redeem from infamy the leader of a popular movement against the monstrous kingly, priestly, and baronial outrages under which the laboring classes had suffered so long, and attract the admiration of the people to his memory and his cause. Such was the feeling of Leggett, also, who longed to try his own hand at a drama on this very theme, but could never quite raise his literary courage to the point.

The main motive of the tragedy, then, is the exaltation of the sublimest of mortal aspirations,—the grand idea of popular liberty and equality—against unjust and cruel prerogative. It is a burning oration and poem of democracy. It is full of the horrible wrongs of the feudal system, the dreadful crime and ferocity of the past, but likewise penetrated and glorified with those thrilling sentiments of justice, freedom, and humanity which forecast the better ages yet to be. Thus, while European and retrospective in the revengeful temper that glows in its situations, it is

American and prophetic in the moral and social coloring which irradiates its plot. And herein is indicated the secret of its immense popularity. The Jack Cade of Forrest stirred the great passions in the bosom of the people, swept the chords of their elementary sympathies with tempestuous and irresistible power. From the first to the last it secured and maintained a success similar to that which had previously crowned Metamora and Spartacus. The Lear of Forrest was the storm, and his Broker of Bogota the rainbow, of his passion. Othello was his tornado, which, pursuing a level line of desolation, had on either side an atmosphere of light and love that illumined its dark wings. Macbeth was his supernatural dream and entrancement of spasmodic action. Hamlet was his philosophic reverie and rambling in a charmed circle of the intellect. But Jack Cade was his incarnate tribuneship of the people, the blazing harangue of a later Rienzi inflamed by more frightful personal wrongs and inspired with a more desperate love of liberty. In it he was a sort of dramatic Demosthenes, rousing the cowardly and slumberous hosts of mankind to redeem themselves with their own right hands.

The opening of the play brings before us a vivid picture of the condition of the working-class, and the temper it had engendered; and at the same time skilfully foreshadows the character of the hero.

"*The hovels of the bond discovered.* JACK STRAW, DICK PEMBROKE, ROGER SUTTON (*bondmen*), *dressed coarsely, with implements of labor, as if going to their work.*

Straw. Of corn three stinted measures! And that doled
With scourge and curse! Rough fare, even for a bondman.
Pembroke. Yet must he feed, from this, his wife and children;
What if they starve? Courtnay cares not for that.
Sutton. His music is the lash! He makes him merry
With our miseries. Our lords are hot and harsh,
Yet are they milder than their mongrel minions.
Straw. I'd cheerly toil, were Courtnay yoked this day
Unto my plough.
Pembroke. He seizes on the havings,
The little way-found comforts of the bond,
Nor vouchsafes e'en a 'Wi' your leave, good man.'
Sutton. Man, matron, maid,—alas that it is so!
All are their victims.
Pembroke. Would we were not men,
But brutes,—they are used kindlier!
Straw. Men are we not.

Brutes only would bear this. Bond have there been
Who brooked it not.
Pembroke. Who were they?
Straw. Old Cade, one;
Who struck down the Lord Say,—not this base coystrel,
Courtnay, but e'en Lord Say,—because he spurned him.
Pembroke. He died for it.
Straw. But what of that? 'Tis better
To die than thus to live. His stripling son,—
Young Cade,—remember you Jack Cade?
Pembroke. Not I.
Our Sutton must.
Sutton. He who, some ten years gone,
Fled from the barony?
Straw. The same. Well, he,
A bondman and a boy, stood by, when Say
Wronged the pale widow Cade, by a base jest
Upon the husband he had scourged to death.
What think you did the boy?
Pembroke. Rebuked his lordship?
Straw. He struck him down, and 'scaped the barony.
He hath ne'er since been heard of. So he won
Both liberty and vengeance.
Sutton. A brave boy!
'Twas Friar Lacy taught him this: and he
Says that all men are in God's image made,
And all are equal."

The good democratic priest, Lacy, whose loving care and instructions had largely moulded the mind of young Cade, says to the poor yeoman,—

"I've told you oft
That man to man is but a brother. All,
Master and slave, spring from the self-same fount;
And why should one drop in the ocean flood
Be better than its brother? No, my masters!
It is a blasphemy to say Heaven formed
The race, a few as men, the rest as reptiles."

The wretched hut of the lonely widow Cade is shown. She soliloquizes,—

"A heavy lot and hopeless!
Stricken with years and sorrow, and bowed down
Beneath the fierce frown of offended power!
The poor have no friends but the poor; the rich—
Heaven's stewards upon earth—rob us of that
They hold in trust for us, and leave us starveling.

They shine above us, like a winter moon,
Lustrous, but freezing."

She sighs for the return of her boy, who, when he fled from his tyrants to seek a land where his heart might throb without the leave of a master, had promised that he would come back some day in honor to avenge her and to redeem his class. Meanwhile, he has become a stalwart and experienced man. Under the name of Aylmere, he has won distinction in the armies of Italy, and delved in the lore of the schools, but never lost sight of his origin and his early hatred of the oppressors of the poor. He now, disguised, enters the cot of his mother with his wife, Mariamne, and their child. He is unrecognized. Lacy, with fatherly pride, tells him of the brave boy missed so long, and proceeds to describe how he had behaved when Lord Say had insulted his mother:

"The proud lord would have spurned him; but young Cade"—

Here Aylmere, with sudden impulse, springs up, throws off his cloak, and cries, with an exulting laugh,—

"I struck him to my feet! I've not forgot it!
How kissed his scarlet doublet the mean earth,
Beneath a bondman's blow, and he a lord!
That memory hath made my exile green!
Look up, my mother, Cade hath kept his covenant.
Could you read all my exile's history,
You would not blush for it. And now I've come
To shield and comfort thee."

This affecting scene was made to thrill every beholder to tears. As the poor widow sank fainting under the shock of surprise and joy, and her son knelt at her feet, all his own mother used to rise in his heart, and his acting was no simulation, but the breathing truth itself.

The ruminations of the exiled Cade in Italy, whose altars, unwarmed for a thousand years, were then lit up with the rekindled fires of free-born Rome,—how he remembered his pale mother, and burned to redeem his brethren, the herded and toil-worn bondmen,—this was described in a speech of amazing eloquence, whose delivery was so imaginative and natural in its free fervor

that the images seemed visibly presented while the tones palpitated among the pulses of their hearers:

"One night,
Racked by these memories, methought a voice
Summoned me from my couch. I rose,—went forth.
The sky seemed a dark gulf, where fiery spirits
Sported; for o'er the concave the quick lightning
Quivered, but spoke not. In the breathless gloom,
I sought the Coliseum, for I felt
The spirits of a manlier age were forth;
And there against the mossy wall I leaned,
And thought upon my country. Why was I
Idle, and she in chains? The storm now answered.
It broke as heaven's high masonry were crumbling.
The beetled walls nodded and frowned i' the glare;
And the wide vault, in one unpausing peal,
Throbbed with the angry pulse of Deity!
I felt I could amid the hurly laugh,
And, laughing, do such deeds as fireside fools
Turn pale to think on.
The heavens did speak like brothers to my soul,
And not a peal that leapt along the vault
But had an echo in my heart. Nor spoke
The clouds alone; for o'er the tempest's din
I heard the genius of my country shriek
Amid the ruins, calling on her son,—
On me! I answered her in shouts, and knelt,—
Ev'n there in darkness, mid the falling ruins,
Beneath the echoing thunder-trump,—and swore
To make the bondmen free."

Domestic scenes occur, where the stern revolutionist, burning to avenge the hoarded injuries of his class, unbends in tender endearments. These two phases of his character heightened each other as the ivy sets off the oak or the flower the rock. Both aspects were equally planted in his nature, and so were equally spontaneous and truthful in his playing. In one mood he says to Mariamne, with fond murmuring inflections of voice, the very music of caressing love,—

"Life's better joys spring up thus by the wayside;
And the world calls them trifles. 'Tis not so.
Heaven is not prodigal, nor pours its joys
In unregarded torrents upon man;
They fall, as fall the riches of the clouds
Upon the parched earth, gently, drop by drop.
Nothing is trifling that love consecrates."

New associations ruffling this mood away, the spirit of his fierce mission sweeps through his soul, and his voice has the sonorous accents of a clarion:

> "I cannot be
> The meek and gentle thing that thou wouldst have me.
> The wren is happy on its humble spray;
> But the fierce eagle revels in the storm.
> Terror and tempest darken in his path;
> He gambols mid the thunder; mocks the bolt
> That flashes by his red, unshrinking eye,
> And, sternly-joyful, screams amid the din:
> Then shakes the torrent from his vigorous wing,
> And soars above the storm, and looks and laughs
> Down on its struggling terrors. Safety still
> Reward ignoble ease:—be mine the storm.
> Oh for the time when I can doff
> This skulking masquerade, and rush into
> The hottest eddy of the fight, and sport
> With peril!"

When they bring him accounts of the sufferings heaped on the poor by their lords, he rejoices that the day of their deliverance is hastened thus; for, he philosophizes,

> "'Tis better, being slaves, that we should suffer.
> Men must be thus, by chains and scourges, roused.
> The stealthy wolf will sleep the long days out
> In his green fastness, motionless and dull;
> But let the hunter's toils entrap and bind him,
> He'll gnaw his chained limbs from his reeking frame,
> And die in freedom. Left unto their nature,
> Men make slaves of themselves; and it is only
> When the red hand of force is at their throats
> They know what freedom is."

One scene of the play which he made wonderfully exciting was where the licentious Lord Clifford steals into his cottage and offers violence to Mariamne. Unexpectedly, as if he sprang up out of the earth just in time to save his wife, Cade appears. He seemed an avatar of avenging Providence as, hurling the base lord back, he loomed above him, with uplifted dagger, his grand physical and moral superiority saying, as plainly as speech,

> "Heaven, not heraldry, makes noble men."

With a fierce laugh he hisses out the words in a staccato of stinging sarcasm,—

"This is a noble death! The bold Lord Clifford
Stabbed by a peasant, for no braver feat
Than toying with his wife! Is 't not, my lord,
A merry jest?
Clifford. Thou wilt not slay me, fellow?
Aylmere. Ay, marry will I! And why should I not?
Clifford. Thou durst not, carle.
Aylmere. Durst not!"

At the urgent solicitation of Mariamne, he spares the recreant noble; but, before letting him go, he utters this speech in a manner which appears to melt wonder, musing, scorn, and threatening into one simultaneous expression:

"Good Heaven! that such a worm, so abject, vile,
Should eat into the root of royalty,
And topple down whole centuries of empire!
I will not crush you, reptile, now: but mark me!
Steel knows no heraldry, and, stoutly urged,
Visits the heart of a peer with no more grace
Than it would pierce a peasant's. Have a care!
The eagle that would seize the poor man's lamb
Must dread the poor man's vengeance; darts there are
Can reach you in your eyrie,—ay, and hands
That will not grieve to hurl them. Get thee gone!"

Left alone with himself, he soliloquizes,—

"And yet I slew him not! But—but—'twill come!
It heaps my shame to heighten my revenge;
And I will feast it fully. Would 'twere here,
Here now! Oh, my arm aches, and every pulse
Frets like a war-horse on the curb, to strike
These bold man-haters down. 'Twill come, 'twill come!
And I will quench this fire in a revenge
Deep as our sufferings, sweeping as their wrongs!"

Another magnificent passage was the reply of Cade to the question of the insurrectionists, what they should demand if they rose. He replied,—mien, voice, and words, soul, face, and tongue, all conspiring to one electric result of eloquence,—

"God's first gift,—the blessed spirit
Which he breathed o'er the earth.—
'Tis that which nerves the weak and stirs the strong;
Which makes the peasant's heart beat quick and high,
When on his hill he meets the uprising sun
Throwing his glad beams o'er the freeman's cot,

And shouts his proud soul forth,—'tis Liberty!
We will demand
All that just nature gave and they have taken:
Freedom for the bond! and justice in the sharing
Of the soil given by Heaven to all; the right
To worship without bribing a base priest
For entrance into heaven; and ALL that makes
The poor man rich in Liberty and Hope!
Rend we a single link, we are rewarded.
Freedom's a good the smallest share of which
Is worth a life to win. Its feeblest smile
Will break our outer gloom, and cheer us on
To all our birthright. Liberty! its beam
Aslant and far, will lift the slave's wan brow,
And light it up, as the sun lights the dawn."

The meeting of Aylmere and Lord Say in the lonely wood was rendered in a way that formed a picture of retributive and awful sublimity. Say was the lord who long years before had caused the elder Cade to be tortured and murdered. And more recently he had ordered the burning of the widow Cade's cottage and forced her to perish in the flames. The avenger confronts this man, but is ignorant of his name and person:

"*Say.* Sirrah! I am a peer!
Aylmere. And so
Am I—thy peer, and any man's—ten times
Thy peer, an thou'rt not honest.
Say. Insolent!
My fathers were made noble by a king!
Aylmere. And mine by a God! The people are God's own
Nobility; and wear their stars not on
Their breasts, but in them!—But go to! I trifle.
Say. Slave! I am the treasurer of the realm,—Lord Say!
Aylmere (*with a laugh of passionate triumph*).
Fortune, for this I do forgive thee all!
Heaven hath sent him here for sacrifice.
The years have yielded up that hour so long
And bitterly awaited. Thou must die!
Say. Thou wouldst not slay me, fellow!
Aylmere. Slay thee! Ay, by this light, as thou wouldst slay
A wolf! Bethink thee; hast not used thy place
To tread the weak and poor to dust; to plant
Shame on each cheek, and sorrow in each heart?
Hast thou not plundered, tortured, hunted down
Thy fellow-men like brutes? Is not the blood
Of white-haired Cade black on thy hand? And doth not
Each wind stir up against thee, fiend! the ashes

Of her whom yesternight you gave the flames?
Slay thee, thou fool! Why, now, what devil is it
That palters with thee, to believe that thou
Canst do such deeds and live!
Say. I am unarmed;
'Twere craven thus to strike me at advantage.
Aylmere (with a scornful laugh and throwing away the dagger).
Why, so it were! Hence, toy!
We're equal now; and I would have no arms
But those the tiger hath against thee!—Now
For vengeance, justice for the bondmen!"

Before the glorious insurrection of the toilsmen against their tyrants is fairly afoot, Cade is entrapped into the power of his foes and doomed to execution. Heart-sick of the cruelty of the rich and strong, the unhappiness of the poor and weak, the failure of the generous aspirants who would fain set things right, he said,—and his voice had the sound of a consoling psalm swelling and fading along funeral vaults,—

"So be it! Death! the bondman's last, best friend!
It stays th' uplifted thong, hushes the shriek,
And gives the slave a long, long sleep, unwhipped
By dreams of torture. In the grave there is
No echo for the tyrant's lash;
And the poor bond knows not to shrink, or blush,
Nor wonder Heaven created such a wretch.
He who has learned to die, forgets to serve
Or suffer! Thank kind Heaven, that I can die!"

But by a fortunate turn of affairs he escapes from his prison in season to head the decisive battle.

"*Lacy.* Thank Heaven! thou'rt free!
Aylmere (laughs). Ay! once more free! within my grasp a sword,
And round me freemen! Free! as is the storm
About your hills; the surge upon your shore!
Free as the sunbeams on the chainless air;
Or as the stream that leaps the precipice,
And, in eternal thunder, shouts to Heaven,
That it is free, and will be free forever!
Straw. Now for revenge! Full long we've fed on wrong:
Give us revenge!
Aylmere. For you and for myself!
England from all her hills cries out for vengeance!
The serf, who tills her soil, but tastes not of
Her fruit, the slave that in her dungeon groans,
The yeoman plundered, and the maiden wronged,

Echo the call, in shrieks! The angry waves
Repeat the sound in thunder; and the heavens,
From their blue vaults, roll back a people's cry
For liberty and vengeance!"

The peasants are victorious, and bring in a rabble of nobles and priests as prisoners. They now have the sinister luxury of turning the tables on their masters. This was done with a sarcasm whose relish seemed to smack to the very bones and marrow.

"*Lord.* You will not dare to hold us?
Aylmere. Heaven forefend!
Hold a lord captive! Awful sacrilege!
Oh, no! We'll wait on you with trembling reverence!
Ay, veil our brows before you,—kneel to serve you!
What! hold a lord!
Archbishop. He mocks us.
Aylmere. Save your lordships!
Pembroke, take hence and strip these popinjays,
These moths that live for lust and slaughter! strip them,
Garb their trim forms and perfumed limbs in russet,
And drive them to the field! We'll teach you, lords,
To till the glebe you've nurtured with our blood;
Your brows to damp with honorable dew,
And your fair hands with wholesome toil to harden.
Lord. Thou wilt not use us thus?
Aylmere. And wherefore not?
Lord. Heaven gave us rank, and freed that rank from labor.
Aylmere. Go to! thou speak'st not truth! Would Heaven, thou fool,
Wrest nature from her throne, and tread in dust
Millions of noble hearts, that worms like thee
Might riot in their filthy joys untroubled?
Heaven were not Heaven were such as ye its chosen."

The triumphant insurgents compel from the king the promise of a charter declaring the bondmen free. But, at the height of his success and glory, Cade is stabbed by a nobleman whom he has condemned to be executed for his insufferable crimes. As he lies in a dying state, a cry is heard without, declaring the proclamation of the charter. Mowbray rushes in, bearing it unrolled, and displaying the royal seal. Cade starts up with a wild burst of joy, seizes the charter, kisses it, clasps it to his bosom, sinks to the floor with one slow, expiring sigh,—and the curtain falls on the dead Liberator of the Bondmen of England.

It is a terrible play, full of the ravage of fearful passions, but

it is also full of that truth and that justice which are attributes of God, and work their retributive results in hurricanes of hatred and battle, as well as sow their blessings in milder forms. The chronic political and social experience of mankind has always been terrible; and the drama, to be true to its full function, must sometimes teach terrible lessons terribly. The implacable animosity of Cade, his vendetta-hunt for revenge, his frenzied curse on the murderous noble who had mixed the blood and gray hairs of his mother with the ashes of her cottage, his gloating satiation of his vengeance at last, are not beautiful, but may be edifying. Provoked by such frightful wrongs as he had known, and enlarged by connection with a whole race similarly treated for ages, they appeal to the deepest instinct that sleeps in the crude blood of human nature,—the wild tooth-for-tooth and eye-for-eye justice of equivalent reprisals taken nakedly man to man. This indomitable basis of barbaric manhood, with all its dread traditions of even-handed retribution, was powerful in Forrest. He believed in it as a natural revelation of the divine justice, and he delighted in a part on the stage in which he could make its ominous signals blaze against those who could wrong the poor or trample on the weak; for thus he glorified the democrat he was by nature through the democrat he displayed in his art. It is obvious that such a performance must be extremely offensive to several classes of persons, and give rise to expressions of censure and disgust. And here is a key to considerable of the vindictive and contemptuous criticism levelled against Forrest. But all such criticism is incompetent and unfair, because springing from personal tastes and moods, and not from standard principles. Unquestionably, those types of man representing the moral ideals which tend to woo towards us the better future they prophesy, are more lovely and benignant than the types representing the real products and makers of history in the past, with all their merits and faults. But judgment must not be pronounced on the dramatic impersonation of a character from negative considerations of its æsthetic or ethical inferiority to other forms of character. It is to be rightly judged from its truth and power in its own kind and range; for that is all that the player professes to exhibit. And, furthermore, this is to be said in behalf of the moral influence of a character represented on the stage whose energies spurn

hypocrisy and mean compromises, whose passions flame straight to their marks without cowardice or disguise,—that such a character is far more noble and wholesome than any of those common types of men who have no originality of nature, no spontaneous power, but are made up of timid imitations and a conventional worship of custom and appearance. One is often tempted to say, Better the free impulses of that stronger and franker time when the passions of men broke out through their muscles in deeds of genuine love, righteous wrath, and lurid crime, than the pale, envious, and sneaking vices that thrive under a civilization of money, law, and luxury. Better express a hostile feeling through its legitimate channels than secrete it to rankle in the soul. This was the thought of Forrest; and there is, no doubt, some truth in it. But it is to be said, on the other side, that the cultivated suppression of antipathies weakens them, and it is by this method chiefly that the world moves in its slow progress from the barbarisms of revenge to the refinements of forgiveness.

It remains, in conclusion, also to be said, that whatever exceptions the religious moralist or the fastidious critic may take to Cade, as delineated by the author and as incarnated by the actor, he was never the assassin, but always the judge,—his vengeance never the blow of caprice, but always of Nemesis. Nor did he ever play the selfish demagogue. His heart was pure, his hands were clean, his soul was magnanimous, and his tongue was eloquent:

> "I seek not power:
> I would not, like the seeled dove, soar on high
> To sink clod-like again to earth. I know
> No glory, save the godlike joy of making
> The bondmen free. When we are free, Jack Cade
> Will back unto his hills, and proudly smile
> Down on the spangled meanness of the court,
> Claiming a title higher than their highest,—
> An honest freeman!"

So far from being a vulgar agitator, catering to the prejudices of the mob, he strives to restrain them from every extravagance, teaching them their duty in golden words:

> "Liberty gives nor light nor heat itself;
> It but permits us to be good and happy.

It is to man what space is to the orbs,
The medium where he may revolve and shine,
Or, darkened by his vices, fall forever!"

Certainly such a dramatic rôle has ample moral justification in what it is from all fault-finding based on what it is not. The writer and the player might join hands and say, in the language of their own hero,—

"We cannot fail!
The right is with us, God is with the right,
And victory with God."

The performance was no mere strutting piece of empty histrionics, but the carefully-studied and conscientious condensation into three hours of a whole vigorous and effective life, devoted in a spirit of profound justice to the avenging of wrongs and the disinterested service of the needy. And in a world where the lives of most men are absorbed in the gratification of pecuniary greed, sensual desire, or social vanity, such a representation must be ennobling in its legitimate influence. If in any instance its exhibition fed class-hatred or personal ferocity, the blame lay with the spectator, not with the player any more than it is a fault in the sunshine that it makes vinegar sourer. The true moral result of the artistic portrayal of condign punishment is not to cultivate the spirit of vengeance, but to dissuade from that primary infliction of wrong which breeds punishment.

Leggett died in 1838, just as he had received an appointment to Guatemala, a late and reluctant tribute from the triumphant political party of which he was one of the noblest ornaments. He had been too true to the principles of democracy to be popular with the partisan leaders. They feared and disliked him for his incorruptible integrity and his uncompromising devotion to impartial humanity and justice. He perished before he was forty years old, in the midst of his chivalrous warfare against slavery, a sacrifice to his heroic toils and the over-generous fire of his enthusiasm. He had felt, as Forrest said in his Fourth of July Oration, "If in any respect the great experiment which America has been trying before the world has failed to accomplish the true end of government,—the greatest good of the greatest number,—it is only where she herself has proved recreant to the fundamental article of her creed." Accordingly, reckless of his selfish

interests, he toiled to reform his party and bring its practice up to its theory. His stern earnestness made enemies and held him back from patronage. Forrest found in him a congenial spirit, and loved him better than a brother. He furnished him first and last in his two literary enterprises, the "Critic" and the "Plaindealer," about fifteen thousand dollars, all of which was lost. After this, when the unfortunate struggler was in extreme pecuniary and mental distress, the two friends one evening were supping together in a private compartment in a restaurant. The gloom, despondency, and haggard air of Leggett alarmed his friend. "Has anything dreadful happened? What is the meaning of this?" said Forrest. "Ah, my good friend," answered Leggett, "it means that I am in absolute despair, and I am going to end the miserable conflict now and here." He snatched the carving-knife from the table and was on the point of thrusting it into his heart, when Forrest seized his arm, exclaiming, "Good God, Leggett, be reasonable, be calm! This is not just to your family or to your friends." "But," replied the unhappy man, "I am overwhelmed with debts: in another week I shall have no roof over my head; and I see no prospect of better days." The actor was deeply moved, and his voice faltered a little. "Come, come," he said, "I have abundance, and am piling up more. Why should you not share in it? I will relieve you of your worst embarrassments with cash; and I have a nice house at New Rochelle, just vacated by its tenant. I will give it to you freely, gladly. You are still a young man; you have great talents and reputation; and there is glorious work for you in the world yet. Come, cheer up, my good fellow." And he took his friend by the arm, and did not leave him until he received from him at his own door a hearty "God bless you, my dear friend, and good-night!"

Forrest kept his word to the amount of about six thousand dollars more. It was an act of impulsive love and aid to a noble man who deserved it, and to whom the giver felt greatly indebted for his ever-faithful friendship and sound counsels and the inspiring example of his character. It was a secret which he never betrayed to the world at all. It is now told for the first time by the biographer, to whom it was reluctantly narrated in the course of those confidential communications which reserved nothing.

Reputations fade out so fast, and the worthiest are forgotten so soon, in our hurrying land and day, that the average reader can hardly be supposed to know much, if anything, of this earliest and best friend of Forrest. His quality of manhood is to be seen in the tribute of his political and literary associate, William Cullen Bryant:

"The earth may ring from shore to shore
With echoes of a glorious name,
But he whose loss our hearts deplore
Has left behind him more than fame.

"For when the death-frost came to lie
Upon that warm and mighty heart,
And quench that bold and friendly eye,
His spirit did not all depart.

"The words of fire that from his pen
Were flung upon the lucid page
Still move, still shake the hearts of men,
Amid a cold and coward age.

"His love of truth, too warm, too strong,
For hope or fear to chain or chill,
His hate of tyranny and wrong,
Burn in the breasts he kindled still."

And his moral portrait is still more firmly drawn in prose in this extract from the memorial of him by John G. Whittier: "William Leggett! Let our right hand forget its cunning when that name shall fail to awaken generous emotions and aspirations for a higher and worthier manhood. True man and true democrat; faithful always to liberty, following wherever she led, whether the storm beat in his face or on his back; unhesitatingly counting her enemies his own; poor, yet incorruptible; dependent upon party favor as a party editor, yet risking all in condemnation of that party when in the wrong; a man of the people, yet never stooping to flatter the people's prejudices; he is the politician of all others whom we would hold up to the admiration and imitation of the young men of our country. What Fletcher of Saltoun is to Scotland, and the brave spirits of the old Commonwealth time are to England, should Leggett be to America."

Forrest sorrowed deeply and long over the death of this brave man and devoted friend. He never forgot him, nor ceased, in

unbent and affectionate hours, to recall his memory, with pleasing incidents of their intercourse in those earlier days which wore romantic hues when old age had stolen on the retrospective survivor.

A good example now occurs of those numerous bitter and cruel newspaper attacks on Forrest, elicited by his great professional success, his prominence before the public, and his brusque individuality. A paper, fitly called "The Subterranean,"—edited by a brawling politician named Mike Walsh,—whose motto was "Independent in everything, neutral in nothing," published an article, a column in length, the substance of which was as follows:

"William Leggett.—His Widow.—Disgraceful Conduct of Ned Forrest.—Ingratitude of the Democracy.

"Leggett, like ourselves, battled boldly against all the power and corruption of the Democratic party, and untiringly strove to achieve a radical reform in its abuses. The purity of his principles proved fatal to him. He was hunted and baited while living, the same as we have been since his death, by every paltry and polluted scoundrel whose grasping avarice is likely to be affected by the elevation of the destitute and forlorn portion of their fellow-men.

"If battling for the oppressed and degraded portion of the human family is to subject a man, while living, to want, misery, ingratitude, and persecution, and to embitter his dying moments with the knowledge that when dead his family will be left destitute in a selfish world,—receiving the sneers of his enemies and the neglect of his friends,—you will find but few possessed of sufficient courage to tread so thorny, cheerless, and disheartening a path.

"We know not how to characterize the conduct of Ned Forrest in this matter. Leggett found him in an obscurity from which he never could have emerged by any effort of his own. With a magnanimous generosity peculiar to men of great minds, he tendered the use of his intellect and purse. Forrest gladly accepted it; and to that aid is he chiefly indebted for the immense fortune which he has subsequently acquired. Mrs. Leggett called on him the other day, and with a cold, heartless, hell-born ingratitude, which we would have scarcely expected from the most irredeemable hunker in existence, he treated her as though she

were the greatest stranger on earth,—refusing the common civility due even to a stranger."

The purpose of this outrageous libel was a political one. It was designed to break down the popularity of the favorite actor with the New York Democracy, who were then again talking of bringing him into official life. Walsh wished to make him unavailable as a candidate, so as to keep the way open for another. In accordance with the programme, means were taken to stir up indignation and excitement to mobocratic pitch. It was noised abroad that there would be a riot. The theatre, for the first time in years when he played, was but half full, and with very few ladies. But Mrs. Forrest, with Mrs. Leggett at her side, and a few other lady friends, were in a front box. When the player came forward as the curtain rose, there was dead silence. Instead of beginning the performance, he addressed the audience:

"Ladies and Gentlemen,—Allow me to say a few words to you in vindication of myself from a slanderous attack which has been made upon me by an obscene paper called 'The Subterranean,' and repeated by the 'Herald,' the characteristics of which print I will not shock your feelings by naming. To those who know me personally, I trust it is unnecessary for me to repel such foul aspersions, but to those who do not know me, I beg leave to submit the following very short letter:

"'New York, October 30th, 1843.

"'My dear Friend,—I have seen with surprise and astonishment in the 'New York Herald' of to-day an article which purports to be an extract from a certain print published in this city, and said to be edited by a Mr. Walsh; and I have no hesitation in declaring every charge contained therein, so far as regards yourself, to be entirely false. Yours,

"'Elmira Leggett.'

"Ladies and Gentlemen,—I am sorry to be obliged to intrude upon you even for these few minutes, but, however small my pretensions may be as an actor, you must allow me to say that I value my character as a man and a citizen far higher than I should all the fame ever acquired by all the actors that ever lived, from the days of Roscius down to our own."

At the conclusion of this pithy speech the audience rose and

applauded with enthusiasm, amidst which Forrest retired for a few seconds, and then re-appeared as the Cardinal Richelieu.

The "Herald" of the next morning said:

"He evidently suffered from considerable nervous excitement; but that passed away gradually, and in the closing scenes he was great,—worthy of himself,—worthy of the warmest applause of the most judicious of his audience. Had it not been for the timely publication in yesterday's 'Herald,' we would have had materials for a much more exciting paragraph. A formidable band of rowdies had been organized; a riot would undoubtedly have taken place had not the information given by us led to the publication of Mrs. Leggett's letter in the 'Evening Post,' and to judicious proceedings on the part of two worthy citizens who are engaged in collecting a subscription for her benefit.

"It was an interesting scene:—the living vindicating his conduct to the dead, whose arm while in life had so well sustained him, and in the presence of *that* witness."

Another instance of that personal abuse, of that annoying public interference with private affairs, from which eminent artists, particularly of the dramatic profession, suffer so much, was given in connection with the proposition for a theatrical benefit for the poor in Philadelphia. Forrest met this impertinence with a spirit of resolute independence and common sense so characteristic that it is worth while to relate the circumstances. In our country, subserviency to public opinion is so common, a cowardly conformity to what fashion commands or one's neighbors expect is so much the rule, that vigorous assertions of individuality are wholesome, and every resolute rejection on good grounds of the dictation of meddlers is exemplary. With all his democracy, Forrest was ever a man quite competent to this style. When the aforesaid benefit had been for some time officiously urged, and Forrest did not see fit to volunteer his services, a great many articles were printed reflecting on him for his backwardness, and virtually demanding that he should come forward. He took advantage of his great popularity, and risked it in so doing, to rebuke this kind of procedure and to assert for himself and his professional associates the right to dispose of their time and earnings as they themselves should choose. This letter speaks for itself:

"DEAR SIR,—Your letter has just been received, in which you are signified as the organ of several philanthropic gentlemen of this city, desirous of obtaining my sentiments in relation to the much-talked-of 'Benefit for the Poor.'

"You, sir, in common with my fellow-citizens with whom I have the honor to be personally acquainted, will do me the justice to think that I am not altogether void of 'tear-falling pity,' or that my sympathies are entirely shut against the sufferings of the poor. So far from this, sir, I am disposed to do all in my power to alleviate their distresses, and will most cheerfully give two hundred dollars (my price for one night's performance), or five hundred, nay, one thousand, if *any one* of your numerous anonymous correspondents, who display so much anxiety for the relief of the poor, will 'go and do likewise.' An act like this will argue a greater sincerity to serve their fellow-creatures than the officious disposal of the time and exertions of others (which costs *them* nothing), or their boasted philanthropy through the medium of the public press.

"From the numerous applications made to me to perform for charities in almost every city that I visit, in my own defence I have found it necessary to make a rule which prevents the exertion of my *professional* services in behalf of any charity, excepting that of the Theatrical Fund for the relief of decayed or indigent actors. The necessity of making such a rule will at once be obvious to you. For if I performed for one and denied another, I must give offence; and if I answered all the demands of this nature made upon me, my time and energies must be thrown away upon others, to the total neglect of myself and those who have the most immediate claims upon me. The actor's profession 'is the means whereby he lives;' and who shall dictate to him the disposal of his hard-earned gains, any more than to the mechanic, the merchant, or the advocate?

"I thank you, sir, for the opportunity which you have afforded me of vindicating myself in regard to this matter, and of making known my reasons for declining to perform on the occasion referred to.

"Very respectfully,

"Your ob't servant,

"ROBERT MORRIS, Esq. "EDWIN FORREST."

The editor of the paper in which the letter was published added, "Now let us see whether the benevolent souls who have been egging him on to the execution of their purposes will show a generosity like his own!"

Travelling over the country amidst all kinds of people and scenes, as he did in his avocation, Forrest naturally had many adventures. Two or three of these may be narrated as having intrinsic interest or throwing light on his character. He was once on board a Mississippi steamer when a passenger, whose name and destination were unknown, was attacked by the cholera in its most violent form. He was a dark, stalwart man, who had been promenading the deck, showily dressed, a pistol projecting from his left breast-pocket, a bowie-knife dangling under his right arm. The unknown man felt that he was doomed, and had only just time and strength to say that he had some money on his person, before sinking back dead in the presence of the horror-struck throng. The captain took from around the waist of the unfortunate man a quilted belt, a foot in width, in which were packed thirteen thousand dollars in gold eagles. As there was no known claimant for the money, it was agreed that it should be given to a hospital in New Orleans. The boat was anchored, and they hurriedly wrapped the body in a long roll of canvas and placed it in a rude box, and went on shore to bury it. It was a still, starlight night in August; and as the company landed on their sombre errand, the wide waters of the river gleamed between its dark shores. A continuous wood of gigantic cotton-wood trees stretched from the bank, their trunks and boughs clasped by great vines, which looked, among the fantastic shadows flung by the pitch-pine torches, like so many serpents crawling in every direction. Digging a trench, they lowered the box into it, with no other service than the muttered words, "In the name of God we commit this body to the ground," threw the earth over it, and returned and proceeded on their way. The experience was a most impressive and dramatic one, the circumstances of the scene combining to color and frame it into a vivid natural cartoon.

The following anecdote was published many years ago in the "Sunday Courier," under his own signature, by Charles T. Heiner, of Baltimore, and the narrative is known to be strictly authentic. It is given here in his words, abbreviated:

"After a long absence, I found myself sailing up the Mississippi River, bound for home. One morning, as I left my state-room, I saw the passengers gathered on the forward deck. Inquiring the cause, I was told that a man had just died who had left, without protection, two children, a boy of seven years and a girl of five. The wife of the man, I was also told, had recently died, and the children were now orphans, and friendless and destitute. My informant had scarcely ceased speaking, when I observed a gentleman of herculean mould and dignified air, who possessed great personal beauty, pass by where I was sitting, having on his arm the little daughter of the deceased, who was sobbing bitterly, her little face nestled close to his breast. The boy, who was also sobbing, the stranger led by the hand, and, while his lips quivered and tears stood in his eyes, he was soothing the little mourners with words of hope and kindness, his full, rich voice being modulated to the tender tones of a woman. Much moved by the scene, I followed them and a large number of passengers into the cabin, where I found the two orphans standing in the centre of the group, their arms around each other's necks, mingling their tears and sobs.

"'Come, come, be a little man,' said the stranger to the boy; 'don't cry. I will take care of you,—I will be your father.' And he drew the little girl to him and wiped the tears from her eyes, regardless that his own were also overflowing, while the members of the group around showed no less feeling than he.

"One of the number called the assembly to order by nominating a chairman, a Mr. Jones, a planter, whose estate was about thirty miles farther up the river. He accepted the office, and said that, with the assent of the company, he would take charge of the orphans and rear and educate them. This proposition was well received by all the passengers except the stranger, who, during these proceedings, had been sitting apart in conversation with the little waifs that the act of God had cast upon the stream of charity. Hastily loosening the arms of the little girl from about his neck, he stepped forward and addressed the group.

"'I have been forestalled,' said he, 'by the gentleman who has made the proposal to which you have just listened. He has children,—I have none. I will take one of these children, and here pledge my honor to rear it with the same tenderness that I would

exercise if it were my own. Let me divide with your chairman these gifts of Providence, and I will give him the privilege of electing which to take.'

"The silence which followed these remarks was broken by the voice of the little boy, who was old enough to comprehend the nature of what was passing, and who had been an eager listener to the words of the stranger, and whose hand he now seized in both his own. 'Oh, don't take me from my sister!' said he. 'When father died, he told me I must never leave her. Let us both go with you; she loves me very much, and father said that in a little while I should be strong enough to work for her. Don't take her away from me!' And the little fellow's voice trembled, and he looked imploringly into the stranger's face, who was melted to tears by this appeal.

"'You shall not be separated, my little hero,' replied the stranger, 'but shall remain together.' Then, turning to the group, he said,—

"'I will relinquish my claim to your chairman; but it must be on two conditions. The first is, that he shall draw on me annually for one-half of all the expenses which may be incurred in the rearing and educating of these orphans; and here is the first instalment of one hundred dollars.'

"'I cheerfully assent to that,' replied Mr. Jones. 'What is the other?'

"'That if you should die, or circumstances should prevent your continuing their protector, they shall be sent to me.'

"'I also agree to that.'

"'Take them, then, and may God bless them and you!' said the stranger, as he kissed the weeping orphans, who, in that brief space of time, with the quick instincts of children, had learned how much he was their friend.

"The bell rang, planks were taken in, and, ten minutes after the scene I have described, the steamer was once again puffing on her course, leaving the little ones and their new friend standing on the bank of the river waving us their sorrowful adieu.

"'Who is that gentleman?' said I to one of the passengers, whom I had drawn apart.

"'Why, don't you know him? That is FORREST, the tragedian!'"

A letter written by Mrs. Forrest to her youngest sister-in-law, Eleanora, while absent with Edwin on one of his distant theatrical engagements, may find a fitting place here, for the interest of its domestic allusions and of its description of the scenery on their journey:

"BUFFALO, August 29th, 1843.

"MY DEAR ELEANORA,—According to the promise made in Philadelphia, I will endeavor to give you some account of our travels in the Far West. From New York we went first to Detroit, where Edwin was engaged to perform for six nights; but the business was so good that he was induced to remain eleven.

"On leaving Detroit, we took the railroad to Jackson, the capital of Michigan, and then proceeded by stage to a village called Battle Creek, in all a journey of about one hundred and thirty miles. There we remained overnight. After this we abandoned the public conveyances so long as we travelled in Michigan,—the routes taken by the stages being generally through the most uninteresting portions of the country, and the additional expense of a private conveyance being small, and the additional comfort great. Leaving Battle Creek, our road lay through one of the most beautiful portions of the State. For nearly twenty miles we rode through magnificent forests of huge old oaks, unencumbered by any undergrowth, and surrounded on all sides by wild flowers of every form and hue, roses, lilies, and the vivid scarlet lobelia everywhere growing up in the richest luxuriance. Occasionally we proceeded for a mile or two along the banks of the Kalamazoo River, a most picturesque stream, but so shallow that it may be easily forded almost anywhere. Sometimes we came to a natural meadow hundreds of acres in extent, on which apparently no tree or shrub has ever grown. These meadows are universally surrounded by high banks and immense trees, the growth of ages, which leads one naturally to suppose that they may have been the beds of lakes, of which there are a great number in this part of the country. These meadows are of infinite advantage to the farmer, yielding him fine crops of hay and saving him the labor of at least one generation, which would otherwise be employed in clearing away the trees. We spent some portion of a day in the village of Kalamazoo in walking about the place in search of Edwin's lots, which eventually we

found. As the railroad will be completed to this place next year, these lots will in all probability be worth something. At Kalamazoo we remained one night, and started the next morning for Prairie Ronde. Here we saw one of the wonders of the western country, a magnificent prairie, fifteen miles across, the greater portion of it in a high state of cultivation, the soil very fine, and the farms in a flourishing condition, with a neat little village in the centre. Those prairies, however, which are wholly uncultivated present a much finer prospect to the traveller, being an immense sea of wild flowers, stretching as far as the eye can reach, without a tree or a shrub to interrupt the view. We remained one night at a village on White Pigeon Prairie, about thirty miles from the last one I named, and the next day proceeded to Niles. Our road, during the greater portion of the morning, was through the woods, and by the side of the St. Joseph River. The scenery is very beautiful. On entering the village of Niles, Goodman, who was standing at the door of his store, immediately recognized Edwin and stopped the carriage. He insisted on our going to his house, which Edwin at first refused, but Goodman said he had been expecting us all the week, and seemed so anxious about the matter that Edwin finally consented to go. I am sure you will be glad to hear that Edwin settled all his business with Goodman, and is satisfied that he has acted honestly. We remained there two days and a half, and he and Mrs. Goodman made us very comfortable. They have a neat little cottage, and two acres of land adjoining it, and apparently every comfort which they can require. On leaving Niles, we went to St. Joseph, and there took the boat to Chicago, a very pretty town finely situated on Lake Michigan. After remaining here a day, we took a steamboat for the Upper Lakes, and in two days reached Mackinaw, a most beautiful little island, where there is an annual meeting of most of the Indian tribes, who gather there to receive their pay from the Government. We at first purposed remaining a few days there; but finding that there were no accommodations for us, and that the boat would remain long enough to allow of our seeing all that we wished, we walked on shore, saw a sufficient number of Indians to satisfy all reasonable curiosity, and in a condition which tends to destroy the romantic ideas we are apt to form of them. We returned to our boat, which, after stop-

ping at several places, brought us in three days more to Buffalo. I must not omit to tell you that on Sunday we had a sermon from an Episcopal minister, and, there being no time the same day for any other, on Monday we had a long discourse from a Mormon preacher; but, my paper being so nearly full, I must not attempt to describe him. Edwin is going to play ten or twelve nights here, and then we go to New York. I think this trip has been of service to him; and he is of the same opinion. He is now in excellent health. I have but little room left to make the many inquiries I would wish concerning you and all in Tenth Street. I hope your dear mother is fast recovering the use of her arm, and that her health in other respects is good. We should like much to hear how she is, and should be very glad to receive a few lines from you. I trust that you and your sisters are all well, and that you escaped the influenza. Edwin desires his love to mother, Henrietta, Caroline, and yourself. In this I beg most heartily to join, and remain ever,

"Yours, affectionately,

"CATHARINE FORREST."

Forrest, after playing in Nashville in 1842 or 1843, visited Jackson at the Hermitage, in Tennessee, where the venerable ex-President was passing in peaceful retirement the last days of his stormy life.. Jackson, who was himself one of the greatest actors who ever appeared off the stage, had often seen him act, knew him well, and not only made him welcome, but insisted on his staying with him as his guest. Forrest did so, and extremely enjoyed the intercourse with the celebrated man for whom he had always cherished the greatest political and personal admiration. It was in the height of the agitation about the annexation of Texas to the United States. While there, Forrest broached this topic. In an instant the stooped and faltering sage was all alive, for he felt a passionate interest in the subject. In a few minutes, warming with his own action, he rose to his feet, seized a map in his left hand, and entered vehemently into the whole argument in behalf of the project on political, commercial, and social grounds. As his eyes glanced from point to point on the map, they glowed like two gray balls of fire. His right hand followed the direction of his eyes, and the pitch of his voice obeyed the inflec-

tions of his hand. His cheeks flushed, his white hair flew back like the mane of an aged lion, his head rose on his lifted and dilated neck, the motions of his limbs and torse were made straight from their joints, and he inveighed with the mien of an angry prophet. Forrest was actually startled by the spectacle of so sudden a change from drooping decrepitude to sublime power. He never forgot it as the best unintentional lesson he had ever received in dramatic expression. He afterwards bore in mind this proof of the electric capacity of feeble old age to be suddenly charged and emit lightnings and thunders, when he modelled the great explosions of his Richelieu.

Year on year now passed by with the fortunes of the player still wearing an aspect nearly all smiles. Though liberal, he was prudent, and the investments of his large income were always marked by shrewd foresight. His strength was enormous, his health and spirits for the most part were unvarying, his popularity was unabated, caps tossed for him in the theatre and eyes turned after him in the street, his home was blessed with love and peace, and his mother and sisters gave him the pleasure of seeing their steady happiness in the honorable repose and comfort he had provided for them. Well might he be an agreeable and cheerful man, genial with his friends, delighting in his profession, proud of his country and his countrymen, unpoisoned and undepressed as yet by misjudgment and abuse. So things were with him when, in 1845, attracted by a handsome managerial offer, moved by the desire of his wife to revisit her early home, and encouraged by the recollection of his flattering success before, with a strong hope of enhancing it in repetition, he resolved to cross the sea once more, and, in a selection of his favorite characters, present himself anew on the British Stage.

There was at this time one ominous element working in him which had been the cause of considerable irritation to him already, and which was to be unexpectedly aggravated in the experience now immediately before him. In his twenty years of professional life with its waxing celebrity he had encountered so many jealousies and slanders, so much envy, meanness, and treachery,—in his intimacy with artists, politicians, and other ambitious men his sharp discernment had seen so much base plotting and backbiting, so much pushing of the unworthy into prominence by

dishonorable methods, and so much sacrificing of the meritorious and modest by falsehoods and shameless tricks of superior address,—that his early estimate of the average of human nature had been lowered and some degree of distrust and reserve developed. The change was not conspicuous, but it had begun, and it foreboded further evil. He had an open, truthful nature, especially characterized by love of justice and detestation of all double-faced or underhanded dealings. He was also a man of a deep and sensitive pride. Finding himself assailed continually with incompetent and acrimonious criticism, and in some cases pursued with malignant libels, he was naturally nettled and angered. With a man of his warm and tenacious temper the experience was a dangerous one, which tended to feed itself and to grow by what it fed on. Had he been gifted with that saintly spirit which bears wrong and insult with meek or magnanimous forgiveness, he would have escaped a world of strife and suffering. But in regard to injuries he was an Indian rather than a saint. Accordingly, the interested opposition and coarse abuse he met put him on probation for misanthropy. Fortunately, his reason and sympathy were too strong to yield to the temptation. But in his later career we shall see what was originally his generous outward struggle with adversity and the social conditions of success partially changed into a bitter inward conflict with men.

CHAPTER XIII.

SECOND PROFESSIONAL TOUR IN GREAT BRITAIN, AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.—THE MACREADY CONTROVERSY AND RIOT.

Few persons have any adequate idea of the prevalence, the force, the subtile windings of envy and jealousy among men, especially among those classes into whose life the principle of rivalry directly enters. The more patiently and profoundly any one studies the workings of these passions in his own soul, the larger will be his estimate of the part they play in society. And then, if his experience be such as to admit him to the secrets behind the scenes of social life, revealing to him the selfish collusions, plots, bribes, and wire-pullings concealed beneath the conventional appearances of openness and fair-play, his allowance for the operation of sinister forms of self-love will receive another important enlargement. No other class is so keenly beset by these malign suspicions and grudges, these base motives to depreciate and supplant one another, as those who are competitors for public admiration and applause. There are obvious reasons for this fact, and the fact itself is notorious and unquestionable. The annals of the stage in all its departments, tragic, comic, operatic, teem and reek with the animosities and cabals of those who have seemed to dislike one another in even proportion as they were favorites of the public. Forrest, with all his faults, was remarkably free from this mean and odious vice of professional envy. He never sought by hidden means or dishonorable arts of any kind either to gain laurels for himself or to tarnish or tear off the laurels of others. He was always ready to applaud merit in another, and always rejoiced generously to have his fellow-actors generously praised when they deserved it. When on the stage, he did not strive to monopolize everything, and add greatness and lustre to his own part by belittling and darkening the parts of others. He was not that kind of man. He had too

strong a sense of justice, too much pride and too much sympathy, to be capable of such action. The form his self-love took when excited in hostility was an angry resentment of injustice. The injustice might be fancied sometimes, but it was that which he identified with the offender, and hated accordingly. And his wrath manifested itself not in secret or overt measures of injury, not in a silent malignity circulating poisonously in the heart and brain, but in frank and passionate expression on the spot, in hot gestures, flashes of face, and strokes of voice. He vented his indignation extravagantly, like Boythorn, but elaborated no methods of doing harm, and was incapable, in his haughty self-respect, of purchasing a critic or consciously slandering a rival.

Garrick had such a prurient vanity, so morbid a dread of censure and love of praise, that he not only persuaded hostile critics not to attack him and friendly ones to write him up, but also freely used his own skilful pen for the same purpose. He wrote anonymous feeble condemnations of his own acting, and then replied to them anonymously with convincing force, thus inflaming the public interest. Voltaire is well known to have done the same thing. But these were both men of vanity, not of pride. Vanity hates rivals, and is monopolizing and revengeful, and a mother of all meannesses. Pride furiously resents attacks on itself, but does not spontaneously attack others. It asks but freedom and a fair field. Deny these, and it grows dangerous. When any one assailed or undertook to lower Daniel Webster, he was met with the most imperious repulse and transcendent scorn. The kindling wrath of the haughty giant was terrible. But the mere supposition that he could ever have stooped to offer a bribe to any one, or to curry favor of any one, is absurd. Forrest was a man of the same mould. The anger of such natures at any meddlesome attempt to disparage them has this moral ground, namely, it is their aroused instinct of spiritual self-preservation. The man of vulgar inferiority, in his coarse and complacent stolidity, cares little for the estimates others put on him. But the man conscious of a great superiority—a Webster or a Forrest—is keenly alive to whatever threatens it. His sphere of mental life enormously surpasses his sphere of physical life. The elemental rhythm of his being, which marks the key-note of his

constitution and destiny, has a more massive and sensitive swing in him than in average persons, and his feelings are intensely quick to drive back every hostile or demeaning valuation ideally shrivelling and lowering his rank. The consciousness of such a man is so vital and intelligent that it intuitively reports to him every sneer, derogatory judgment, or insulting look, as something intended to compress and hamper his being of its full volume and freedom of function. Thus Forrest could not meekly submit to be undervalued or snubbed; but he had no natural impulse to undervalue or snub others, or to imagine that they stood in his way and must be thrust aside.

The distinguished English actor, William Charles Macready, with whom circumstances brought the American into a professional rivalry which deepened into bitter enmity, was a man in every respect of a very different type. All his life he had an extreme distaste and a moral aversion to his profession; yet, by dint of incessant intellectual and mechanical drill, he placed himself for a term of years at its head in Great Britain. He was of vanity and irritability and egotistic exactingness all compact, insanely sensitive to neglect and censure, greedily avid of notice and admiration. He seemed scarcely to live in the direct goals of life for their own sakes, but to be absorbed in their secondary reflections in his own self-consciousness and in his imaginations of the opinions of other people concerning him and his affairs. A man of a morbidly introspective habit, a discontented observer, a spiritual dyspeptic, he coveted social preferment and shrank from the plebeian crowd,—

> "And 'twas known
> He sickened at all triumphs not his own."

This severe estimate is unwillingly recorded, but it is amply justified by his own memoirs of himself, posthumously published under the editorship of his literary executor. His diary so abounds in confessions and instances of bad temper, vanity, arrogance, angry jealousy, and rankling envy, that it serves as a pillory in which he exhibits himself as a candidate for contempt. In an article on "Macready's Reminiscences," the "Quarterly Review" (English) says, "Actors have an evil reputation for egotism and jealousy. No one ever lay more heavily under this

imputation than Mr. Macready while on the stage. We have heard the greatest comedian of his time say of him, 'Macready never could see any merit in any actor in his own line until he was either dead or off the stage.' The indictment was sweeping, but this book almost bears it out. In his own words, the echo of applause, unless given to himself, fills him 'with envious and vindictive feelings.' He abhors and despises his own profession. While still on the stage he says, 'It is an unhappy life. We start at every shadow of an actor, living in constant dread of being ousted from popularity by some new favorite.' After leaving the stage he says, 'I can now look my fellow-men, whatever their station, in the face and assert my equality.' And these things he says in the face of the fact that he owed all his consequence to his success as an actor."

Macready had played a successful series of engagements in the United States in 1843. He was well received, much praised, and carried home a handsome sum, though the profit was mostly his own, since the managers generally made little, and many of them actually lost by him. He was not popular with the multitude, but was favored by the selecter portion of the public. His enjoyment, too, of the eulogies written on his acting was a good deal dashed by the censure and detraction in which some of the writers for the press indulged. His social success, however, was unalloyed. He and Forrest up to this time were on good terms, terms of genuine kindness, though any strong friendship was out of the question between natures so incompatible. Forrest had honorably refused urgent invitations from several managers of theatres in different cities to play for them at the time Macready was acting in rival houses. The two or three weeks of his engagement in New York Macready spent in the house of Forrest, who received a very cordial letter of thanks from Mrs. Macready, in London, in acknowledgment of his generous attentions and hospitality to her absent husband.

There were at that time many Englishmen connected with the leading newspapers in this country. They naturally felt that the cause of Macready was their own, and expatiated on the beauties of his performances, not a little to the disparagement of the American player. On the other hand, the national feeling of other writers affirmed the greater merits of their own tragedian.

By natural affinity the English party drew to themselves the dilettante portion of the upper stratum of society, the so-called fashionable and aristocratic, while the general mass of the people were the hearty admirers of Forrest. The cold and measured style of the foreigner, his rigid mannerism and studied artificiality, were frequently spoken of in unfavorable contrast with the free enthusiasm, the breathing sincerity and impassioned power, of the native player. Forrest was called a rough jewel of the first water, who scorned to heighten his apparent value by false accompaniments; Macready a paste gem, polished and set off with every counterfeit gleam art could lend. The fire of the one was said to command honest throbs and tears; the icy glitter of the other, the dainty clappings of kid gloves. Such expressions plainly betray the spirit that was working. These comparisons—though there were enough of an opposite character, painting the Englishman as a king, Forrest as a boor—greatly irked and nettled Macready. And it was known that he went back to England with a good deal of soreness on this point.

When Forrest made his first appearance in London, at Covent Garden Theatre, a few months after the return of Macready from his American trip, the latter, as well as all his compeers, Charles Kemble, Charles Kean, and Vandenhoff, was without any London engagement. This circumstance of itself was calculated to quicken jealousy towards an intruding foreigner who threatened to attract much attention. However, as it is known that Forrest had nothing to do with the depreciating notices of Macready written in America, it is to be supposed that none of the English tragedians had any hand whatever in the scurrilous critiques of Forrest written in their country, or in the attempt made to break him down and drive him from the London stage. But such conspicuous personages always have in their train, among the meaner fry of dramatic critics and their hangers-on, plenty of henchmen who are eager to do anything in the fancied service of their lords, even to the discredit and against the will of those whose cause they affect to sustain.

On the evening of the 17th of February, 1845, as Forrest appeared in the character of Othello, he was saluted with a shower of hisses, proceeding from three solid bodies of claqueurs, packed in three different parts of the house. So often as the legitimate

audience attempted any expression of approval, it was overpowered by these organized emissaries. Beyond any doubt it was a systematic plan arranged in advance under the stimulus of national prejudice and personal interest, whoever its responsible authors were or were not. Forrest, though profoundly annoyed, gave no open recognition whatever of the outrage, but went steadily on with his performance to the end. The next evening, when he played Macbeth, the disturbances were more determined than before; but the large majority of the crowded assembly upheld the actor by their applause, and again he gave no heed to the interruptions and insults. The force of the conspiracy was broken, and gave no further overt signal, and the engagement was played through triumphantly. But Forrest left Covent Garden with a bitter and angry mind. He ruminated unforgivingly, as it was his nature to, on the injurious and unprovoked treatment he had received. For the hisses, suborned as they evidently were, did not constitute the worst abuse he had to bear. Three or four of the London newspapers, known as organs of special dramatic interests, most notably the organ of the bosom friend of Macready, noticed him and his performances in a tone of comment shamefully without warrant in truth. A few specimens will suffice to prove the justice of this statement:

"Mr. Forrest's Othello is a burlesque of the elder Kean's mannerisms, his air of depressed solemnity, prolonged pauses, and startling outbursts, with occasional imitations of Vandenhoff's deep-voiced utterance, varied by the Yankee nasal twang. His presence is not commanding, nor his deportment dignified; for the assumption of grandeur is not sustained by an imaginative feeling of nobleness. His passion is a violent effort of physical vehemence. He bullies Iago, and treats Desdemona with brutal ferocity. Even his tenderness is affected, and his smile is like the grin of a wolf showing his fangs. The killing of Desdemona was cold-blooded butchery."

"Our old friend Mr. Forrest afforded great amusement to the public by his performance of Macbeth. Indeed, our best comic actors do not often excite so great a quantity of mirth. The change from an inaudible murmur to a thunder of sound was enormous. But the grand feature was the combat, in which he stood scraping his sword against that of Macduff. We were at a

loss to know what this gesture meant, till an enlightened critic in the gallery shouted out, 'That's right! sharpen it!'"

"Of Mr. Edwin Forrest's coarse caricature of Lear we caught a glimpse that more than sufficed to show that the actor had no conception of the part. His Lear is a roaring pantaloon, with a vigorous totter, a head waving as indefatigably as a china image, and lungs of prodigious power. There only wanted the candle-wick mustaches to complete the stage idea of a choleric despot in pantomime."

"Mr. Forrest's Richard the Third forms no exception to those murderous attacks upon Shakspeare which this gentleman has so ruthlessly made since his arrival amongst us. Since the time of that elder Forrest, who had such a hand in the murder of the princes in the Tower, we may not inappropriately take this last execution of Richard at Drury Lane to be

> 'The most arch deed of piteous massacre
> That ever yet this land was guilty of.'

"We have tried very hard, since witnessing the performance, to discover the principle or intention of it; but to no effect. We remember some expressions, however, in an old comedy of Greene's, which may possibly suggest something to the purpose. 'How,' says Bubble, on finding himself dressed out very flauntingly indeed,—'how apparel makes a man respected! The very children in the street do adore me!' In almost every scene Mr. Forrest blazed forth in a new and most oppressively-gilded dress, for which he received precisely the kind of adoration that the simple Bubble adverts to."

But while the hostile papers characterized the change in the acting of Forrest from what it was on his earlier visit as an unaccountable deterioration, and censured him without reason, other journals took up his defence, praised his performances warmly, and affirmed that he had made great improvement. What the former stigmatized as a becoming dull, cold, and formal, the latter eulogized as an outgrowing of former extravagance and an acquiring of refinement, measure, and repose. As he went on playing, his opponents diminished in numbers and virulence, while his supporters increased, and at last he had conquered a real triumph. It will be well to quote a few of the notices which appeared in

friendly and impartial quarters in contrast to those of an opposite character already cited.

The Athenæum, in speaking of his opening night in Macbeth, said, "Mr. Forrest's former manner has received considerable modification and become mellowed with experience. He has learned that repose is the final grace of art. In the startling crises of the play his voice and action, both without effort, spring forth with crushing effect, not because he is an actor who chooses thus to manifest strength, but because he is a strong man, who simply exerts his excited energies. Macbeth, as he now performs it, is a calm and stately, almost a sculpturesque, piece of acting."

The Sun called his Lear a decisive triumph, and used the following words:

"Those contrasts, in which he delights, all tell well in the character of Lear, and they were used with excellent discrimination and great effect. There was something appalling in the bursts of fury with which that weak-bodied but intensely-impassioned old man was occasionally convulsed. The tottering gait, the palsied head, the feeble footsteps of old age were admirably given; but the deep voice and the manly contour of the figure showed that it was the old age of one who had been, in the heyday of life, 'every inch a king.' It was the old oak tottering to its fall, but the monarch of the forest still. The passion, too, was most artistically worked up to a climax, increasing in intensity from the scene in which he casts off Cordelia, through the scene in which he curses Goneril, until in the scene in which he becomes convinced of the treason of Goneril, when it became the desolating hurricane, destroying even reason itself. The scenes with Edgar were beautifully given. The different phases of the approach of madness were admirably marked. You could see, as it were, reason descending from her throne. The scene with Gloucester, too, was very fine; the biting apothegms which Shakspeare has in this scene put into the mouth of Lear were given with heartless, bitter, scornful, laughing sarcasm, which is perhaps one of the most unfailing characteristics of madness. The recognition of Cordelia was beautifully touching, and the lament over her dead body was given with an expression of heart-rending pathos of which we did not before imagine Mr. Forrest capable."

The praise given by the Times was still more emphatic:

"Mr. Forrest's Lear is, from beginning to end, a very masterly, intelligent, and powerful performance, giving evidence of the most careful and attentive study of the author's meaning, steering clear, at the same time, of all fine-drawn subtleties and tricky point-making, and affording a well-grasped and evenly-sustained impersonation of that magnificent and soul-stirring creation. He is certainly a better Lear than any our own stage has afforded for some time. Although, from Mr. Forrest's personal appearance, one would with difficulty imagine him capable of looking the old man, fourscore and upwards, all the attributes of age and feebleness, the palsied head and tottering walk, are admirably assumed, and are never lost sight of throughout the performance. At his first appearance he was received with considerable applause, which was repeatedly renewed as he continued with the scene,—commencing in a tone of kingly dignity and paternal affection, and, after Cordelia's reply, gradually giving place to the suppressed workings of his rage, which at last burst forth, at Kent's interference, into an ungovernable storm, and lit up his features with the most withering expression of fury. The curse at the end of the second act, which was pronounced by Mr. Forrest in one scream of rage, his body tremulously agitated with the violence of his emotion, brought down burst after burst of applause, which lasted considerably after the fall of the drop; and indeed an attempt was made to introduce that very unusual compliment when the play is still unfinished, a call for the actor. Such displays of physical power, although in this instance perfectly called for and necessary, are not, however, the chief or the best points on which the merits of Mr. Forrest's performance rest. The scene where he discovers Kent in the stocks, and is subsequently confronted with his two daughters, whose insults finally drive him off distracted, was acted with great play and variety of expression,—Mr. Forrest passing from one emotion to the other with childish fitfulness, and displaying a keen and discriminate perception. The mad scenes also in no less degree evinced the higher qualities of the actor. The declamatory bursts of passionate satire on the vices and weaknesses of the world, chaotically mingled with the incoherences of madness, had evidently been a subject of minute study, and were shaded with admirable nicety, the features constantly expressing the alternate

return of light and darkness on the old man's brain. In the last act, the touching simplicity and tenderness of his manner, when too exhausted for violent emotion, and the last burst of feverish energy over the body of Cordelia, were equally well conceived. If there be any fault to find, it was with the death, which was, perhaps, too minutely true in its physical details.

"Mr. Forrest was called for at the conclusion, and received enthusiastic marks of approbation."

The following extract is from a notice of his Othello by the John Bull:

"Mr. Forrest's former visit to this country must be fresh in the memory of theatrical amateurs. His talents were then generally admitted; but it was remarked that, though he possessed force, it was more of a physical than a moral kind, and that his action was more akin to melodrama than to tragedy. Since that time Mr. Forrest seems considerably changed, and for the better. His action has become more quiet, chaste, and subdued. It is now, perhaps, too careful and measured, and we rather missed something of his former rough and somewhat extravagant energy. We cannot help thinking that one or two of our contemporaries have relied rather on their remembrance of what Mr. Forrest *was* than their perception of what he *is*. On the whole, his representation of Othello well merited the immense applause it received."

Scores of notices like these in the best portion of the English press prove conclusively enough the malignity of writers who could denounce their American visitor as a theatrical impostor, worthy of nothing but contempt. The London Observer, for example, could find nothing better to say of the Metamora of Forrest than this: "His whole dramatic existence is a spasm of rage and hatred, and his whole stage-life one continuous series of murder, arson, and destruction to life and property in its most hideous form. What a pity he could not be let loose upon the drab-colored swindlers of Pennsylvania! Mr. Forrest did not indicate one of the characteristics of the American Indian except that wretched combination of sounds between a whine, a howl, and a gobble, which is designated the war-whoop by those who think more of poetry than of truth. Besides this sin of omission, he has to answer for those sins of commission which so sadly

deface his impersonation of every part he has appeared in, namely, that cool, nonchalant manner, that slow motion, and that ridiculous style of elocution, now whispering, now conversational, ever and anon screaming, roaring, bellowing, and raving, but never sustained, truthful, or dignified:

> 'List to that voice! Did ever discord hear
> Sounds so well fitted to her untuned ear?'"

The Age and Argus spoke of the most extraordinary contrast of the conduct of a part of the press towards Mr. Forrest to the treatment he received when he acted at Drury Lane in 1836, and said, "Many persons intimate that had he been now engaged there instead of appearing at the Princess's, the theatrical reporters would have been unable to discover a single fault in his performances,—managerial tact being competent to guide the honest opinions of most of these gentry. The 'Observer' endeavors to depict Mr. Forrest as a fool, an idiot, whose performance is simply ludicrous; albeit we have reason to believe the writer is the self-same person who seven years ago tried to write him up as a first-rate tragedian."

Forrest thought, from some direct proofs and a mass of circumstantial evidence, he could trace the fierce hostility with which he was met to its chief source in Macready. He may have been mistaken; but such was his belief. Macready, returning from America irritated towards him as a more than formidable rival before the people, was now idle, and had repeatedly failed to draw a remunerative audience in London. In fact, such was the temper of the man that when manager Bunn was nightly losing money by him, and, in order to make him break his engagement, purposely vexed him by casts which he disliked, he one night rushed off the stage in a fury, and, without a word of provocation, fell on Bunn, a much smaller and weaker man, and beat him so dreadfully that the poor manager lay in bed in frightful agony for two weeks. He was prosecuted, convicted, and forced to pay a hundred and fifty pounds damages. Macready was the intimate friend of the theatrical critic who abused Forrest the most unrelentingly. He was the intimate friend of Bulwer Lytton, who refused the request of Forrest to be allowed to appear in his two plays of "Richelieu" and "The Lady of Lyons."

He was the intimate friend of Mitchel, the manager of the English theatrical company in Paris, who rudely refused to see Forrest when he applied to him for an interview. This last circumstance was especially mortifying, as he had informed his friends before leaving home that he intended to perform in Paris, and flattering notices of him and of his purposed appearance among them had been published in the French press.* Macready himself had failed to make an impression in Paris, and the English company there was not pecuniarily successful. Forrest believed, whether correctly or not, that his rival had interfered to prevent his engagement there. Thus his antagonism was edged with a sharper hate.

Meanwhile, the respective adherents of the rivals fanned the flames of the quarrel by their constant recriminations in the press, and kept the controversy spreading. Criticisms, accusations, rejoinders, flew to and fro between the assailants and the cham-

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* "Forrest a reçu le surnom de Talma de l'Amérique, et ce surnom n'est point immérité. Forrest, de stature plus grande, plus athlétique que Talma, a avec lui une certaine ressemblance de tête. Il a étudié ce grand modèle auquel il a gardé une sorte de culte, et, dans son dernier voyage de Paris, en 1834, sa première visite fut à la tombe du grande artiste, sur laquelle il alla modestement et secrètement déposer une couronne. Il y a quelque chose de touchant et d'éloquent dans cet hommage apporté des rives lointaines du Nouveau-Monde à celui qui fut le roi du théâtre européen. Forrest a dans son répertoire certains rôles qui auront pour le public français un grand attrait de nouveauté. Tel est, par exemple, celui de l'Indien Metamora, qu'il rend avec tant d'énergie et de sauvage vérité. A son talent de premier ordre, Forrest a dû non-seulement une réputation sans rivale en ce pays, mais encore une très-belle fortune. Il est aussi haut placé comme homme que comme artiste. Il est l'un des tribuns les plus éloquents du parti démocrate, et il a été un moment question de le nommer représentant du peuple au congrès. Il a donc toute espèce de titres à une réception brillante et digne de lui de la part du peuple parisien, si hospitalier à toutes les gloires. A ses titres nombreux à cette hospitalité, M. Forrest en a ajouté un encore, s'il est possible, par la manière honorable et cordiale dont il a parlé de la France dans le discours d'adieu qu'il a adressé l'autre jour aux habitans de Philadelphie. Voici la fin de ce *speech :* 'Pendant le voyage que je vais faire à l'étranger, je me propose de donner quelques représentations dans la capitale de la France, où je recevrai, je n'en doute pas, l'accueil le plus bienveillant et le plus cordial. Je crois que je ne hasarde rien en osant tant espérer. Je parle d'après ma connaissance personnelle du peuple francais, au sein duquel je sais qu'un Américain est toujours bien venu. Un Américain se souvient avec gratitude que la France a été l'alliée, l'amie de son pays, dans la guerre de son indépendance, et la nation française n'a point oublié que c'est à l'exemple de l'Amérique qu'elle doit son initiation à la grande cause de la liberté humaine.'"

pions of each side. An extract from an article by one of the best-informed of the English friends of the American actor, though obviously written with a bias, yet throws light in several directions. He says, "There are half a dozen writers for the press in London who are recipients of constant attentions from the clique with which Macready lives, a clique of wits, artists, authors, and men-about-town, who hover in the outskirts of high life and form a barrier stratum between the lesser aristocracy and the critics. The critics support upward, the clique transmit notice downward, and Macready controls this clique by the consequence he has as favored by the noblemen who play the patron to his profession. Forrest is a true republican, and cannot be a courtier,—

'He would not flatter Neptune for his trident.'

He neglects the finical rules and scorns to observe the demands of the courtly circles which arrogate all superiority to themselves." Under these circumstances a growing dislike and a final collision between the men were inevitable by the logic of human nature.

Thus the quarrel went on, nor was confined to the scene of combat. Its echoes rolled back to America, growing as they went, and adding, somewhat extravagantly, to their individual import a national significance. A long article appeared in the "Democratic Review," entitled "Mr. Forrest's Second Reception in England." A portion of it will be found still to possess interest and suggestiveness:

"It is the fortune of this country to send over the water from time to time men who are palpable and obvious embodiments of its spirit, and who do not fail, therefore, to stir the elements among which they are cast.

"Daniel Webster was one of these; and we all recollect how his motions were watched, his words chronicled, his looks at court, in Parliament, and at agricultural dinners taken down. They felt that he was a genuine piece of the country, and, in presence of his oak-ribbed strength of person and understanding, acknowledged that he belonged to the land he came from. Mr. Forrest is another of these; quite as good in his way; struck out of the very heart of the soil, and vindicating himself too clearly to be misunderstood, as a creature of its institutions, habits, and daily life. His biography is a chapter in the life of the country; and

taking him at the start, as he appears on the Bowery stage (a rugged, heady, self-cultured mass of strength and energy thrown down in the most characteristic spot in the American metropolis), and running on with him through all his career, in the course of which it became necessary for him more than once to take society by the collar, down to the day when, in his brass-buttoned coat, he set out for this second expedition to Europe, we shall find him American every inch, the growth of the place, and well entitled to make a stir among the smooth proprieties of the Princess's Theatre. And he has done so. When, after an absence of something like seven years, he heaves up his sturdy bulk against the foot-lights on the English house, the audience know him at once to be genuine: but lurking in the edges of the place are certain sharp-eyed gentlemen, who in the very teeth of the unquestionable force before them, massive, irregular it may be, discover that Mr. Forrest has lapsed from his early manner, and has subsided into tameness and effeminacy!

"Mr. Forrest's English position at this moment is, in our view, just what his true friends would desire. He is carrying his audiences with him; and has from the press just the amount of resistance required to rouse him to new efforts, and to bring out the whole depth and force of New-Worldism in him, to play an engagement such as he has never played before, and to measure himself in assured strength by the side of the head of the English school.

"Mr. Macready, an admirable performer, succeeds by subduing all of the man within him; because he ceases, in the fulfilment of his function as an actor, to have any fellowship with the beatings and turmoils and agitations of the heart. He is classical in spirit, in look, and action.

"It is because he is a man of large heart, and does not forget it in all the mazes of the stage, that Mr. Forrest has sway with the house. He never loses sight of the belief that it is he, a man, with men before him, who treads the boards, and asks for tears, and sobs, and answers of troubled hearts. It is no painted shadow you see in Forrest; no piece of costume; no sword or buckler moving along the line of light as in a procession; but a man, there to do his four hours' work; it may be sturdily, and with great outlay of muscular power, but with a big heart;

and if you fail to be moved, you may reasonably doubt whether sophistication has not taken the soul out of you, and left you free to offer yourself for a show-case or a clothier's dummy.

"We take an interest in Mr. Forrest because we see in him elemental qualities characteristic of the country, and we feel therefore any slight put upon him as, in its essence, a wound directed at the country itself. He carries with him into action, upon the stage, qualities that are true to the time and place of his origin. Whether rugged or refined, he is upon a large scale, expansive, bold, gothic in his style; and it is not, therefore, matter of wonder that he should have encountered, both at home and abroad, the hostility of simpering elegance and dainty imbecility."

Concluding his London engagement, Forrest proceeded to the principal cities of the United Kingdom and appeared in his leading rôles, and was uniformly greeted with full houses and unstinted applause. The tone of the press towards him was everywhere highly flattering. At Sheffield in particular his success was great. The dramatic company were as much pleased with him as the audiences were, and took occasion on his closing night to express their sentiment in a manner which gratified him deeply. After the tragedy of Othello, Mr. G. V. Brooke, who had sustained the part of Iago, invited Forrest to meet the theatrical company in the green-room, and, entirely to his surprise, addressed him thus:

"Sir,—A most pleasing duty has devolved upon me, in being deputed by my brother actors to express the gratification and delight we have experienced in witnessing your powerful talent as an actor, and your courteous and gentlemanly bearing to your brother professors of the sock and buskin. I am obliged to be very brief in my remarks, as some of the gentlemen around me will have, in a very short time, to be on duty at the post of honor. Allow me, then, sir, before you return to the land of your birth, of which you are a brilliant ornament, to present you, in the name of myself and brother actors, with this small testimonial of our esteem, and to wish that health and prosperity may attend you and Mrs. Forrest, whatever part of the globe it may be your lot to visit."

The following was the inscription on the testimonial, which was a very elegant silver snuff-box: "Presented to Edwin For-

rest, Esq., by the members of the Sheffield Theatrical Company, as a mark of their esteem for him as an ACTOR and a MAN. January 30, 1846."

Forrest replied in the following words:

"I accept this gratifying token of the kind feeling entertained towards me by the members of this company with mingled sentiments of pride and satisfaction. Believe me, there is no praise that could be awarded to my professional exertions so dear to me as that which is offered by my brother actors; for they who, through years of toil, have labored up the steep and thorny pathway which leads to eminence in our laborious art, can alone appreciate the difficulties that must be encountered and overcome. I shall ever look back with sincerest pleasure to my intercourse with the Sheffield dramatic corps, to whose uniform kindness I am greatly indebted for their prompt and cordial co-operation in all the professional duties which we have been called upon to perform together. Both here and at Manchester I have found you always ready and willing to second my views, and any request made to you at rehearsal in the morning you have never failed to perform with alacrity and promptitude at night.

"You have in the kindest terms alluded to the courtesy which you have been pleased to say has characterized my conduct towards all the members of the company. In reply, I can only say, you have, each and all, met me with an entirely correspondent feeling, and I thank you from my heart. These same courtesies shown to one another are productive of a vast amount of good. I cannot but remember that I, too, have gone through the 'rough brake,' that I, too, began the profession in its humblest walks; and I have not forgotten the pleasing and inspiring emotions that were awakened in my youthful breast when I have received a kind word, or an approving smile, from those who were 'older and better soldiers' than myself. And at the same time my experience has taught me that there is no one engaged in the art, be he ever so humble, but some advantage may be gleaned from his observations. As I knew not until this moment of your kind intention to present me with this flattering testimonial, I am wholly unprepared to thank you as I ought. There are feelings too deep to be expressed in words; and such are my feelings now.

"Once more, I thank you: and permit me to add that, should any here, by life's changing scene, be '*discovered*' in my country, I shall take sincerest pleasure in promoting his views to the best of my ability."

While at Sheffield, Forrest attended a banquet given in honor of the birthday of Robert Burns. In response to a toast proposed by the chairman, "The health of Mr. Edwin Forrest, and Success to the Drama in America," he said some of his earliest human and literary memories were linked together with the story of Scotland and the genius of Burns. His own father had left the Scottish hills to seek his fortune in an American city. His earliest tutor, who had taken a generous interest in him in his opening boyhood, and taught him to recite some of the finest of the poems of Burns, was another Scottish emigrant,—Wilson the ornithologist. After a few other words, he closed by reciting the eloquent poem of his friend Fitz-Greene Halleck in memory of Burns, which was received with vociferous cheering:

"Praise to the Bard! His words are driven,
Like flower-seeds by the far winds sown,
Where'er beneath the arch of heaven
The birds of fame have flown.

"Such graves as his are pilgrim-shrines,
Shrines to no code or creed confined,—
The Delphian vales, the Palestines,
The Meccas of the mind."

The Manchester Guardian published a critique on the Spartacus of Forrest quite remarkable for its intelligent discrimination and choice diction. As a description it is very just, but utterly mistaken in its apparent implication that the spiritual should be made more distinctly superior to the physical in this part. The writer seems not to have remembered that Forrest was impersonating a semi-barbaric gladiator, in whom, when under supreme excitement, the animal must predominate over the intellectual. It would be false to nature to depict in such a man under such circumstances ideality governing sense, reason calmly curbing passion. It would be as absurd as to give a pugilist the mental splendor and majesty of a Pericles. The way in which the critic paints Forrest as representing Spartacus is exactly the way in

which alone the character could be represented without a gross violation of truth:

"This is, perhaps, of all others, the character in which Mr. Forrest most excels; nay, stands alone. It implies and demands great physical strength, a man of herculean mould, and we doubt if ever we shall again look upon so fine a model of the lion-hearted Thracian. That he is a barbarian, too, is in favor of the actor; for what would be blemishes in the polished Greek or haughty Roman are in keeping with the rude, untutored nature of the Thracian mountaineer. Since his former visit, Mr. Forrest has certainly improved, especially in the less showy passages of the play; and we admire him most in the quiet asides, the quick and clear directions as to the disposition of his troops, and any other portions of the dialogue that do not demand great emotion. In these he is natural and truthful. As before, when he comes to the delineation of the deeper passions of our nature, it is by energetic muscular action, and by the fierce shoutings or hoarse raving of his voice, that he conveys the idea,—not by any of the nicer touches of mental discrimination and expression. This course—an original one, in which perhaps he stands supreme—is most effective, or rather least defective, in this play, for the reason already given: in it his acting is of a high, but certainly not of the highest, order. It is the material seeking to usurp the throne of the ideal; physical force clutching at the sceptre of the intellectual; with what success the immutable laws of matter and mind will now, as ever, pronounce, in their irreversible decrees. Still, it is an extraordinary histrionic picture, which all lovers of the drama should contemplate. It is not a thing to be laughed at or sneered down. Power there is; at times great mental, as well as physical, power; but in the thrilling situations of the piece, that which should be the slave becomes the master; and energy of body reigns supreme over subordinated intellectual expression and mental dignity. He is the Hercules, or the Polyphemus, not the high-souled hero; and, in his fury, the raging animal rather than the goaded and distracted man."

In Ireland, the acting of Forrest, the magnetic power of his personality, the patriotic sentiments and stirring invectives against tyranny with which his Spartacus and Cade abounded, conspired

to arouse a wild enthusiasm in his passionate and imaginative audiences, and his appearances at Cork, Belfast, Dublin, were so many ovations. The effect of his Jack Cade may be seen in this notice from the Cork Examiner:

"The object of the writer seems to be to rescue Cade from the defamation of courtly chroniclers and historians, who, either imbued with an aristocratic indifference to the wrongs of an oppressed people, or writing for their oppressors, misrepresented the motives and ridiculed the power of the Kentish rebel. In this the author has succeeded; for he flings round the shoulders of the rustic the garb of the patriot, and fills his soul not only with a deep and thorough hatred of the oppressors who ground the people to the earth and held them down in bondage, but breathes into his every thought a passionate and beautiful longing after liberty. The powerful representation of such a play must produce a corresponding impression upon any audience; how strong its appeal to the sympathies of an *Irish* audience, may be better imagined than described. It abounds with passionate appeals to liberty, withering denunciations of oppression, and stinging sarcasms, unveiling at a glance the narrow foundation upon which class-tyranny bases its power and usurpation. In fact, from beginning to end, it is an animated appeal to the best sympathies of MAN, stirring him to the depths of his nature, as with a trumpet's blast.

"An objection might be made to some passages, that they are too declamatory; but this is rather praise to the discrimination and fidelity of the author to nature, than a reproach. When a leader has to stir men's blood, to make their strong hearts throb, he uses not the 'set phrase of peace,'—he does not ratiocinate like a philosopher, insinuate like a pleader; he talks like a trumpet, with tongue of fire and with words of impassioned eloquence. Sufferings, wrongs, indignities, dishonor to gray hairs and outrage to tender virginhood, are not to be tamely told of, but painted with vivid imagination until the heart again feels its anguish and the brow burns at the wrong. This is the direct avenue to men's hearts,—the only way to rouse them to desperate action; and hence the justice of Cade's declamation, when addressing the crushed bondmen of Kent.

"Mr. Forrest's Aylmere had nothing in it of the actor's trick,

—it was not *acting*. He seemed thoroughly and entirely to identify himself with the struggles of an enslaved people; and as every spirit-stirring sentence was dashed off with the energy of a man in earnest it seemed as if it had its birthplace in the heart rather than in the conceiving brain. One passage, in which he calls down fierce imprecations on the head of Lord Say, the torturer of his aged father and the coward murderer of his widowed mother, was magnificently pronounced by Mr. Forrest, amidst thunders of applause, as if the sympathy of the audience ratified and sanctified the curse of the avenging son. Such is the power of true genius!—such the force of passion, when legitimate and earnest!"

At Cork he received the compliments of a poet in the happy lines that follow:

"O'er the rough mass the Grecian sculptor bent,
And, as his chisel shaped the yielding stone,
Rising, the world-enchanting Venus shone,
And stood in youth and grace and beauty blent.
Thus o'er each noble speaking lineament
Of thy fine face, thy genius, FORREST, shines,
And paints the picture in perfection's lines.
With plastic skill Prometheus formed the clay;
Yet soul was wanting in the image cold
Till through its frame was shed life's glorious ray
And fire immortal lit the mindless mould.
Thus, while thy lips the poet's words unfold,
With the rough ore of thought thy fancies play,
And, with a Midas power, turn all they touch to gold!"

On his farewell night he acted Macbeth to a brilliant house. As the drop-scene fell at the close of the last act, deafening shouts re-echoed through the house, with calls for Forrest, which, on his coming in front of the curtain to acknowledge them, were renewed and kept up for a considerable time, the people rising *en masse*, and paying the most marked tribute of their estimation. On silence being restored, he said,—

"LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—Exhausted as I must necessarily feel, owing to the character I have sustained, I cannot find language adequate to express the sentiments that fill my bosom, neither am I able to return suitable acknowledgments for the kindness which you are pleased to evince towards me. I beg

to thank you sincerely for the cordiality and courtesy which I have experienced from the hospitable citizens of Cork during my short sojourn in this 'beautiful city.' Long shall I remember it, and in returning to my native country I shall bear with me the grateful recollection of that courtesy and hospitality; and, when there, I shall often think with pleasure and pride on the flattering reception you were pleased to honor me with. I wish you all adieu, and hope that the dark cloud that overhangs this fair country will soon pass away; that a happier and brighter day will beam on her, and that Ireland and her people will long enjoy the prosperity and happiness they are so eminently entitled to, and which are so much to be desired."

He was quite as triumphant in Dublin as in Cork. The notice of his opening in Othello shows this:

"Mr. Forrest, the American tragedian, made his first appearance on Monday night, as Othello. The selection of the character was, for an actor of great power, most judicious; for in all the glorious range of Shakspeare's immortal plays there is not one so powerful in its appeal to the sympathies of our nature, so masterly in its anatomy of the human heart, or so highly-wrought and yet so beautiful a picture of passion,—nor, for the actor, is there any character requiring more delicacy of perception and personation in its details, nor so much of terrible energy of the wrung heart and stormy soul in its bursts of frenzied passion. An actor without a heart to feel and an energy to express the fearful passion of the gallant Moor, whose free and open nature was craftily abused to madness, could give no idea of the character, and must needs leave the audience as cold and unmoved as himself.

"But, to one glowing with the divine fire of genius, that wonderful electricity by which the inmost nature of man is moved, and masses are swayed as if by the wand of an enchanter, Othello is a noble character for the display of his power,—a resistless spell, by which the eye and ear and soul of the audience are held and moved and swayed. We must admit that such an actor is Mr. Forrest, and that such is the effect which his personation of the loving, tender, gentle, duped, abused, maddened Moor produced upon us, and seemed to produce upon his audience. From the rising to the falling of the curtain the house was hushed in

stilled, almost breathless, attention; and it was not until stirred by some electrifying burst of passion that the pent-up feeling of his listeners vented itself in such applause, such recognition of the justness and naturalness of the passion, as man gives to man in real life, and when, as it were, the interests of the actor and the spectators are one. This species of involuntary homage to the genius of his personation arose not only from the power which a consummate actor acquires over the feelings of others, but from the entire absence of all those contemptible tricks of the stage, those affectations of originality, of individuality,—that is, stamping the counterfeit manner of the actor upon the sterling ore of the author,—those false readings and exaggerated declamations, which call down injudicious but degrading approbation. Mr. Forrest is free from all these defects. And yet his 'reading' is singularly telling. Not one passage—nay, not one word—of the vivid, picturesque, nervous, wondrous eloquence of the poet is lost upon the audience. What might puzzle in the closet is transparent on the stage. The quaint form in which the divine philosophy of Shakspeare clothes itself seems, by his reading, its fit and apposite garb,—as if none other could so well indicate its keen and subtile meaning. And all this is done without aiming at 'points,' or striving after 'effects.' Then his tenderness is tenderness—his passion, passion. Possessing a noble voice, running from the richest base to the sweetest tenor,—if we might so describe it,—full of flexibility, and capable of every modulation, from the hurricane of savage fury to the melting tenderness of love, Mr. Forrest can express all those varied and oftentimes opposite emotions which agitate our nature, and which Shakspeare, as its most masterly delineator, represents in all its phases in his immortal creations, and not least in Othello. We were much struck with the beautiful fidelity with which Mr. Forrest's look, gesture, tone, and manner painted the gradual growth of jealousy, from the first faint, vague doubt, to its full and terrible confirmation, and the change of Othello's nature, from the frank soldier and the doting husband to the relentless fury of the avenger. To our mind it was a noble picture,—bold, beautiful, and delicate."

An event illustrative of the spirit of Forrest occurred on his last evening in Dublin. The play was "Damon and Pythias."

The Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland entered the theatre with a noble party, escorted by a military company with martial music. The audience rose with the curtain, and joined the whole dramatic corps in singing "God save the Queen." Forrest never once during the play looked towards the vice-regal box; and in the bows with which he acknowledged an honorary call from the audience at the close, he studiously avoided seeing the group of titularly-illustrious visitors. He was a democrat; he liked the Irish and disliked their English rulers, and he would not in his own eyes appear a snob. His taste and delicacy in the act were questionable,—his sturdy honesty unquestionable. It reminds one of Goethe and Beethoven standing together when the victorious Napoleon passed in his pomp on the way to Berlin. Both were men of genius and of nobleness; but the one was socially freed by cosmopolitan culture and health, the other socially enslaved by natural inheritance and morbidity. They acted with equal honesty, but in a very different way, as Napoleon went by. Goethe made a low bow, and stood with inclined front; Beethoven crushed his hat over his brows, and thrust himself more stiffly up. Neither he nor Forrest could play the courtier. They could not in social relations abnegate self and react impersonally on others. They must assert that they were themselves, and were democratically willing to allow everybody else the same privilege.

The reception of Forrest in Scotland, notably at Glasgow and Edinburgh, was all that he could have asked. The first literary organ of Edinburgh pronounced its judgment thus: "The three leading characteristics of Mr. Forrest's acting appear to us to be, a bold intellectual grasp of the written soul of his author; a remarkably vigorous and striking execution, accompanied by an apparent contempt for mere conventional rules or customs; and a rare faculty of expressing by the face what neither pen can write nor tongue tell."

It was at Edinburgh that the actor performed what may perhaps be called the most unfortunate and ill-omened deed in his life. Attending the theatre to see Macready play Hamlet, he had applauded several good points made by his rival. But in the scene where the court are about assembling to witness the play within the play, and Hamlet says to Horatio,—

"They are coming to the play; I must be idle.
Get you to a place,"

Macready gallopaded two or three times across the stage, swinging his handkerchief in rapid flourishes above his head. As he was affecting to be mad, it does not seem that the action was in any extreme out of character. But it struck Forrest as inexcusably unworthy, and a desecration of the author. Accordingly, with his usual unpausing forthrightness and reckless disregard of appearances, he gave vent to his disgust in a loud hiss. Macready glowered at him and waved his handkerchief towards him with an air of contemptuous defiance, and repeated his movement. The right of a spectator to express his condemnation of an actor by hissing is unquestioned. Had not Forrest been himself a brother actor, and in unfriendly relations with the performer, his hiss would not have been much noticed or long remembered. But the special circumstances of the case gave it an indelicacy and a bad taste which aggravated its import and led to lasting consequences of hatred and violence. The following letter addressed by Forrest to the editor of the London Times explains the occasion which called it forth, and furnishes the reasons which in the mind of its writer justified his primary deed, though they will hardly be sufficient to justify it in the minds of impartial readers:

"Sir,—Having seen in your journal of the 12th inst. an article headed 'Professional Jealousy,' a part of which originally appeared in the 'Scotsman,' published in Edinburgh, I beg leave, through the medium of your columns, to state that at the time of its publication I addressed a letter to the editor of the 'Scotsman' upon the subject, which, as I then was in Dumfries, I sent to a friend in Edinburgh, requesting him to obtain its insertion; but, as I was informed, the 'Scotsman' refused to receive any communication upon the subject. I need say nothing of the injustice of this refusal. Here, then, I was disposed to let the matter rest, as upon more mature reflection I did not deem it worth further attention: but now, as the matter has assumed a 'questionable shape,' by the appearance of the article in your journal, I feel called upon, though reluctantly, to answer it.

"There are two legitimate modes of evincing approbation and

disapprobation in the theatre,—one expressive of approval by the clapping of hands, and the other by hisses to mark dissent; and, as well-timed and hearty applause is the just meed of the actor who deserves well, so also is hissing a salutary and wholesome corrective of the abuses of the stage; and it was against one of these abuses that my dissent was expressed, and not, as was stated, 'with a view of expressing his (my) disapproval of the manner in which Mr. Macready gave effect to a particular passage.' The truth is, Mr. Macready thought fit to introduce a fancy dance into his performance of Hamlet, which I thought, and still think, a desecration of the scene, and at which I evinced that disapprobation for which the pseudo-critic is pleased to term me an 'offender'; and this was the only time during the performance that I did so, although the writer evidently seeks, in the article alluded to, to convey a different impression. It must be observed, also, that I was by no means 'solitary' in this expression of opinion.

"That a man may manifest his pleasure or displeasure after the recognized mode, according to the best of his judgment, actuated by proper motives, and for justifiable ends, is a right which, until now, I have never once heard questioned; and I contend that that right extends equally to an actor, in his capacity as a spectator, as to any other man. Besides, from the nature of his studies, he is much more competent to judge of a theatrical performance than any *soi-disant* critic who has never himself been an actor.

"The writer of the article in the 'Scotsman,' who has most unwarrantably singled me out for public animadversion, has carefully omitted to notice the fact that I warmly applauded several points of Mr. Macready's performance, and more than once I regretted that the audience did not second me in so doing.

"As to the pitiful charge of 'professional jealousy' preferred against me, I dismiss it with the contempt it merits, confidently relying upon all those of the profession with whom I have been associated for a refutation of the slander.

"Yours respectfully,

"EDWIN FORREST."

March, 1846.

On the appearance in an Edinburgh paper of the severe letter alluded to in the foregoing, the indignation of Forrest was so intense that he resolved to inflict summary punishment on its cause. In the early evening he made an elaborate toilet, donning his best dress-suit, putting on an elegant pair of kid gloves, carefully sprinkling himself with cologne, and sought the dramatic critic, whom he supposed to be the offender, in his customary seat in the upper tier of boxes. Confronting the writer, he fixed his eyes on him, and through his set teeth, in the deadliest monotone of suppressed passion, this question glided like a serpent of speech: "Are you the author of the letter in the 'Scotsman' relative to my hissing Macready?" The man shrunk a little, and replied, "I am not." "It is fortunate for you that you are not; for had you been, by the living God I would have flung you over the balcony into the pit!" said Forrest, and left the box.

Besides this frightful instance of his angered state of mind, an amusing one occurred while he was at Edinburgh. He was rehearsing, when the proprietor and manager of the theatre, a diminutive and foppish man, with a mincing squeak of a voice, came into the front and disturbed the actors. Forrest did not recognize him, and cried out, "Stop that noise!" The intruder retorted, with injured dignity, "This is my theatre, sir; and I shall make as much noise in it as I please, and when I please!" The explosive tragedian towered down upon him and blazed out, in thunder-tones, "Damn you and your theatre! If you ever dare to interrupt me again in this way when I am rehearsing, I will knock your damned head off from your damned shoulders!" The terrified proprietor shrunk away, and did not show himself in the house again till the day after the tragedian's engagement had ended. Then Forrest was in the dressing-room, packing his things, when he saw the manager enter the adjoining room, where the treasurer was sitting. The dapper little man advanced with nimble step, rubbing his hands briskly, and asked, in his dapper little voice, "Has the great American pugilist left town?" Forrest broke into hearty laughter at the ludicrous contrast, and came forward with both hands extended, and they parted as very good friends.

On the Fourth of July, Forrest presided at the celebration of the anniversary of their national independence held by the

Americans in London, at the Lyceum Tavern. The building was decorated with American flags, and the intellectual exercises after the dinner, introduced by the chairman with an effective speech in defence and eulogy of republican institutions, were sustained till a late hour with much enthusiasm.

While in London—it may possibly be that the adventure occurred during his previous visit—Forrest called, by invitation, on Jerome Bonaparte, who was then residing there, and who had seen several of his impersonations, and had expressed a high opinion of their merits. In the course of their conversation, Forrest asked Jerome if he had been personally acquainted with Talma. Smiles broke over the face of the ex-king like sunny couriers from a hive of sweet memories, as he replied, in an exquisitely-modulated voice, "I had the honor of knowing that distinguished man well, and I esteemed him for his character as much as I admired him for his art. He was an honest patriot, who regarded not the fashions of the day. When Napoleon was a poor corporal, Talma was his friend, and gave him free passes to the theatre. He was equally the friend of the emperor, but asked no preferment or gift from him. He was a republican at the first, and he remained a republican to the last. His soul, sir, was as sublime off the stage as his acting was on it." As he spoke these words, Forrest says, a beam of reminiscent joy seemed at once to light up his countenance and brighten his voice.

It was the end of August that the player, sore and weary of his exile, ardently longing for home, sailed for his beloved America, where he well knew a welcome of no ordinary character would greet him. And so it proved. The current tone of the press breathed a hearty friendliness. It assured him that his countrymen had followed his career from his boyhood to his present proud position with a growing interest, and that his recent experience abroad had deepened their attachment to him. Whatever bars had from time to time presented themselves, he had readily overpassed or brushed away, and he was congratulated on having always made good his position with the decisive energy characteristic of his country. He was told that he had secured the affections of the masses of the people to such a degree that his name was a proverb among them, and they would now spring to welcome him home as very few are welcomed.

He waited but four days before appearing as Lear at the Park Theatre. The New York Mirror says, "The house was crowded to excess. The pit rose in mass, and long and loud was the applause, clapping of hands, thumping of canes, waving of hats and handkerchiefs, ending with nine cheers for Edwin Forrest, given with heart and soul. The recipient evidently felt it all. Long may this relation between actor and people be unbroken! It is for the good of both that it should exist. As a man, Mr. Forrest is worthy of this confidence; as the representative of Lear and the greatest nobleness of Shakspeare, and the loftiest minds of the drama, he is trebly worthy of it, for he stands the representative of an heroic truth and dignity. It is impossible that the people should witness such a performance as that of King Lear without elevation and purification of character. On Mr. Forrest's part such a reception must recall to him, more forcibly than the language of any critic, the responsibility that rests upon him as one of the chief representatives of the American stage, an institution which, being yet in its infancy, has capacity for good or evil, the development of which rests upon the present generation. Those who look upon the stage now with any interest regard it with respect to the future, and demand in any actor or dramatic author a reverence for the theatre, and some services in its cause. If we thought the theatre would always remain in its present condition in this country, we should abandon it in despair. But it cannot so remain, any more than our literature can remain merely imitative, or our political life low and pestilent as it is. The stage must rise. No one can render more aid to the cause than Mr. Forrest."

At the close of the play he was honored with the same enthusiastic greeting as at his entrance, and he said, "Ladies and Gentlemen,—I have not words fitly to acknowledge a reception so kind, so cordial, so unexpected. It has so overpowered me that I cannot convey to you the grateful emotions of my heart. Yet, while a pulse beats here or memory continues, I shall ever remember the emotions of my soul at this reception. Ladies and gentlemen, I thank you."

The marked advance in the taste and finish of his performance was owned by all. The Albion said, "He is infinitely more subdued and quiet in his acting; his readings are more elaborated

and studied. His action and attitudes are more classic in their character; and a dignified repose, rendered majestic at times by his imposing figure, gives a tone to his performances wholly unlike the unrepressed energy and overwhelming physical power that formerly were the prominent characteristics of his style. As an instance of the beauty of his present subdued style we would instance the passage in Lear commencing at

'You see me here, you gods, a poor old man'—

"The whole of this passage was given in a strain of subdued, heart-broken pathos, exquisitely natural and effective. Similar touches of genuine feeling are now thrown into his Othello,—which are perfect triumphs of the art,—as are likewise those well-known bursts of intense passion, given with a force of physical power unapproachable perhaps by any living actor.

"Mr. Forrest occupies so prominent a position in his own country, as the greatest living American actor, as the founder of a school,—for he has literally founded a school, as may be seen from his numerous imitators,—and from the influence of his high name,—that we mark these changes in his style as especially worthy the attention of his younger and less experienced cotemporaries."

On his benefit night, in response to the call of the auditory, he made a brief speech, whose tenor showed that he fully felt the responsibility of his position and meant to be faithful to it. Returning his thanks, he added, "And, in the hope that you may continue to approve my efforts, they shall henceforth be employed, most strenuously, to bring the American stage within the influence of a progressive movement, to call forth and encourage American dramatic letters, to advance the just claims of our own meritorious and deserving actors. Yet, while I shall endeavor to exert an influence favorable to American actors, you will do me the justice to believe that I am animated by no ungenerous motives towards the really deserving of any other country; for I should blush to imitate that narrow, exclusive, prejudiced, and, I may add, anti-American feeling which prescribes geographical limits to the growth of genius and talent. True worth is the birthright of no country, but is the common property of all. And, ladies and gentlemen, if it pleases you to applaud and

to second, in this endeavor, my humble efforts, I will say to you, in the language of the old Cardinal in the play,—

"'There's no such word as *fail!*'"

Amidst the cheers elicited by these words, as he made his bow, a garland, enclosing a copy of verses addressed to him, fell at his feet. He raised it and retired, while the orchestra struck up "Home, Sweet Home!"

He then received another flattering compliment from many of the most prominent of his fellow-citizens:

"New York, Oct. 10th, 1846.

"Edwin Forrest, Esq.

"Dear Sir,—The undersigned, your friends and fellow-citizens, desirous of expressing to you personally the high estimation they entertain for your public and private character, avail themselves of the occasion of your return from Europe to invite you to a public dinner, and request that you will set apart one of the few days you are to remain with us, that may be most convenient to you, to accept of this slight tribute to your professional excellence and private worth.

"We are, with great respect,

"Your obedient servants,

"Wm. Cullen Bryant,	Andrew H. Mickle,
James Lawson,	E. K. Collins,
Saml. Ward,	George Davis,
Cornelius Mathews,	Moses Taylor,
Wm. F. Havemeyer,	Evert Duyckinck,
Parke Godwin,	H. Weecks,
Fitz-Greene Halleck,	E. R. Hart,
B. F. Voorhis,	Isaac Townsend,
Prosper M. Wetmore,	A. Ingraham,
James F. Otis,	Jonathan Sturgis,
C. A. Clinton,	A. G. Stebbins,
Jas. T. Brady,	Theodore Sedgwick,
David Graham, Jr.,	George F. Thomson,
L. B. Wyman,	Charles Minturn,
Francis Griffin,	George Montgomery,
Dr. John F. Gray,	John P. Cisco,
John Britton,	J. M. Miller,

HENRY WIKOFF,	MINTHORNE TOMPKINS,
D. P. INGRAHAM,	CHARLES P. DALY,
JAS. PHALEN,	ROBT. H. MORRIS,
W. M. BECKWITH,	EDWD. VINCENT,
MORTIMER LIVINGSTON,	CHARLES M. LEUPP."

To this letter he thus replied:

"NEW YORK, Oct. 12th, 1846.

"GENTLEMEN,—I have had the honor to receive your very kind letter of the 10th inst., in behalf of a number of my friends and fellow-citizens, inviting me to a public dinner, and requesting me to name a day most convenient to myself for its acceptance.

"It did not need this additional testimony to the many already conferred upon me by my fellow-citizens of New York, to assure me of their kind regard, and I feel for this, as well as for other tokens of esteem, that I am indebted more to their kindness than to any deserving upon my part.

"I accept, however, with pleasure, the invitation you have conveyed to me in such flattering terms, and, with permission, appoint Friday next, the 16th instant, as the day to meet my friends as they propose.

"I remain, gentlemen, yours, with sentiments of the highest respect and regard,

"EDWIN FORREST.

"To Messrs. WM. C. BRYANT, C. A. CLINTON, etc."

Accordingly, the committee of arrangements proceeded to prepare for the proposed welcome, and selected the New York Hotel as the place. A large and distinguished company sat down to the banquet. William Cullen Bryant presided, assisted by David Graham, Jr., James T. Brady, Charles M. Leupp, and Egbert Benson, as Vice-Presidents.

The first toast was "Our Country."

The next—"The American Stage. Its brilliant morning gives promise of a glorious day."

In introducing the third toast, Mr. Bryant said, "It is with great pleasure, gentlemen, that I proceed to fulfil a duty which your kindness has laid upon me, that of proposing the health of the distinguished man whom we are assembled to honor. A

great actor, gentlemen, is not merely an interpreter of the dramatic poet to the sense of mankind; he is something more and greater: he is, in his province, the creator of the character he represents. It is true that, from the hints given by the framer of the drama, he constructs the personage whom he would set before us; but he fills up an outline often faint, shadowy, and imperfect, and gives it distinctness, light and shade, and color; he clothes a skeleton with muscles, and infuses it in the blood and breath of life, and places it in our midst, a being of soul and thought and moved by the perpetual play of human passions. Those who have seen the restorations of ancient statues by Michael Angelo have admired the exquisite art, I should rather say the power above art, with which the great Florentine—a genius, if ever one lived—entered into the spirit of the old sculptors, and with what faithful conformity to the manner of the original work, yet with what freedom of creative skill, he supplied those parts which were wanting, and animated modern marble with all the life of the antique. It is thus with the artist of the stage: he supplies what the dramatist does not give,—supplies it from the stores of his own genius, though always in harmony with the suggestions of his author. He often goes far beyond this: he sees in those suggestions features of character which the author failed to perceive, or perceived but imperfectly, and depths of passion of which he had no conception. With these he deals like a skilful landscape painter, who from a few outlines in pencil, which to the common eye appear confused and purposeless, brings out upon the canvas a glorious scene of valley and mountain and dark woods and glittering waters. Those who have read the Richelieu of Bulwer in the closet and seen the Richelieu of Forrest on the stage will easily comprehend what I mean; they have seen the sketch of the dramatist matured and enriched, and wrought into consistence and strength, and filled with power and passion, by the consummate art of the actor. How well our friend has acquitted himself in what is justly esteemed the highest effect of the histrionic art, that of personating the great characters of Shakspeare's dramas, it is hardly necessary for me to say, so ample and so universal is the testimony borne to his success by intent and crowded audiences. The style of that divine poet is so suggestive, the glimpses of character he casually but pro-

fusely gives, are of such deep significance that he tasks the powers of the stage more severely than any other author. To follow out all these suggestions, to combine all these delicate and sometimes perplexing traits of character into one consistent, natural, and impressive whole, requires scarcely less a philosopher than an actor. And well has Mr. F. sustained this difficult test. Never was the helpless and pathetic yet majestic old age of Lear more nobly given, or in a manner to draw forth deeper sympathies; never the struggle between love and suspicion in the breast of Othello, his jealousy in its highest frenzy, and his fine agony of remorse, more powerfully represented. After having placed himself at the summit of his art by the successful representation of these and other characters of Shakspeare in his own country, he has lately returned to us with honors gathered in another hemisphere. It is a source of satisfaction to the friends of Mr. Forrest that he has not fallen a prey to the follies which so strongly tempt men of his profession. He has given us another instance of the truth that a great actor may be an irreproachable man; his private life has been an example of those virtues which compel the respect even of that class least disposed to look with favor on the profession of an actor,—such an example as in the last century made Hannah More the personal friend of David Garrick. In the intense competitions of the stage, Mr. Forrest has obeyed a native instinct in treating his rivals with generosity, and, when beset by calumny and intrigue, has known how to preserve the magnanimous silence of conscious greatness. Genius may command our admiration; but when we see the man of genius occupied only in the endeavor to *deserve* renown, and looking beyond the obstacles which envy or malevolence lays in his path to the final and impartial verdict of his fellow-men, our admiration rises to a higher feeling. Gentlemen, I will no longer withhold from you the toast,—I give a name, without a sentiment,—a name which suggests a volume of them, —I give you 'Our guest, Edwin Forrest.'"

The toast was drunk amidst a tempest of demonstrations.

Mr. Forrest, manifestly agitated by the warmth of these tokens of good will, replied in a speech which was interrupted with frequent applause. He said, "Mr. President and gentlemen, I wish I could in adequate language express my acknowledg-

ments for the distinguished favor you have conferred upon me this day. But the words which I endeavor to summon to my lips seem poor and empty offerings in return for those honors, deep and broad, with which your kindness loads me. The sounds and sights that meet me here to bid me welcome,—the old familiar voices that were raised in kind approval of my early efforts,—faces whose smiles of sweet encouragement gave vigor to my heart to mount the ladder of my young ambition,—this munificent banquet, spread with no party views, the generous offering of my fellow-citizens of each political faith,—the flattering sentiments so eloquently couched by the distinguished man selected to impart them,—all these have stirred my bosom with so many mingled feelings that, in the grateful tumult of my thoughts, I cannot choose words to speak my thanks. A scene like this is no fleeting pageant of the mimic art, to be forgotten with the hour; but it is to me one of those sweet realities of life that fill the heart and vibrate on the memory forever. Among the gratifying tributes, both professional and personal, which you have paid me, you have alluded in flattering terms to the silence I have ever observed when assaulted by calumny or circumvented by intrigue. You will pardon me, I am sure, if upon this occasion I break that silence for a moment by referring to the opposition I encountered during my late reappearance upon the London stage. An eminent English writer, in the 'North British Review,' makes these very just remarks: 'Our countrymen in general have treated the Americans unkindly and unfairly, and have been too much disposed to exaggerate their faults and to depreciate their excellencies.' Here, then, we have an honest and candid avowal of an indisputable fact. With regard to my own case, even before I had appeared I was threatened with critical castigation, and some of the very journals which, upon my former appearance in London, applauded me to the echo, now assailed me with bitterest denunciations. Criticism was degraded from its high office,—degraded into mere cavilling, accompanied by very pertinent allusions to Pennsylvania bonds, repudiation, and democracy.

'All, all but truth falls still-born from the press.'

Relying implicitly upon the verity of this proposition, I quietly awaited the expression of the 'sober second thought of the peo-

ple;' and I am happy to say I was not disappointed in the result. Their approving hands rebuked the malice of the hireling scribblers, and defeated the machinations of theatrical *cliques* by whom these scribblers were suborned. But enough of this. I now turn to contemplate with pride and satisfaction my reception elsewhere. In Edinburgh,—the most beautiful and picturesque city in Europe, where learning is a delight and not an ostentation,—my reception professionally was gratifying in the extreme, while nothing could exceed the friendly hospitalities of private life, presented, as they were, by those who to the highest intellectual culture unite the equally estimable qualities of the heart. And as for Ireland, I need scarcely tell you that in the land of the warm-hearted Irishman an American is always at home. There, from the humblest as from the most exalted man he finds a smile of welcome and a friendly grasp. How could it be otherwise among a people so full of sensibility and impulse, of unselfishness and magnanimity,—a people in whom misrule and tyranny have failed to quench one spark of generous spirit, or to curdle one drop of the milk of human kindness in their hearts? And now a word touching American dramatic letters. One of the wishes nearest my heart has ever been that our country should one day boast a Drama of her own,—a Drama that shall have for its object the improvement of the heart, the refinement of the mind,—a Drama whose lofty and ennobling sentiments shall be worthy a free people,—a Drama whose eloquent and impressive teaching shall promote the cause of virtue and justice, for on such foundations must we rely for the perpetuity of our institutions. And what is to prevent us from having such a Drama? Have we not in our country all the materials, have we not the capacity for invention and construction, and have we not pens (turning to Mr. Bryant) already skilled in the sweet harmonies of immortal verse? In connection with the cultivation and support of a National Drama, the friends of the stage will not be unmindful of the claims of our own deserving actors, among whom, I am proud to say, there are some may challenge successful comparison with any of the 'Stars' that twinkle on us from abroad, and, unlike most of those 'Stars,' they shine with their own and not with a borrowed lustre. One of those actors, to whom I allude, is now seated among you,—one who, in the just delineation of the characters he

represents, has now no equal upon the stage." (At this allusion to Mr. Henry Placide, the applause was very enthusiastic.) "In conclusion, Mr. President and gentlemen, permit me to offer as my sentiment, 'The Citizens of New York, distinguished for a bounty in which is no winter,—an autumn 'tis that grows the more by reaping.'" (Drunk with all the honors.)

Mr. Forrest's toast was responded to by the following, by Mr. Mickle, the Mayor: "The Drama,—it teaches us to honor virtue and talent. We follow its dictates in rendering honor to our guest to-night."

Mr. Mathews proposed the next toast: "American Nationality. In the fusion of all its elements in a generous union under the influence of a noble National Literature lies the best (if not the *only*) hope of perpetuity for the American Confederacy."

General Wetmore rose and alluded to an eminent man who was present at the last public dinner given to Mr. Forrest in New York, one of his dearest friends, and who was now in his grave, and gave "The Memory of William Leggett," which was drunk standing, and in solemn silence.

Other toasts were proposed, letters were read, speeches made, songs sung, and every one seemed thoroughly to enjoy the occasion, which closed by the whole company joining hands and singing "Auld Lang Syne."

Yet, amidst all these honoring and most enjoyable experiences at home, Forrest had brought back with him from abroad a burning grudge. Shut up in his bones, it gnawed upon his comfort and peace. The different theatrical and social parties knew of his grievances through the press. Among his friends, of course, he conversed freely of them; and there was a multitude of his admirers among the populace who were as loyal to him as clansmen to their chief. Their passions exaggeratingly took up what their intelligence knew little about, and they were ripe for mischief whenever an opportunity and the slightest provocation should be afforded them. This, it should be understood, without any purposed stimulus or overt hint from him. Such was the state of things when Macready once more came to America. The ingredients were ready for a popular explosion if a spark should be blown on them. Had the English tragedian kept silent, the latent storm might not have burst; but, unhappily, he

began at once to make allusions to conspiracies, to enemies, to a certain class in the community,—allusions which were but too quickly caught up and applied and resented. And so the virus worked.

Place must here be found for a tender and tragic passage in the life of Forrest, whose date remained thenceforth a sacred and solemn mark in his memory,—the death of his mother.

Dear Lawson,

My Mother is dead.
That little sentence speaks
all I can say, and more,
- much more.

Yours truly
Edwin Forrest.

James Lawson.

June 25. 1847.
Philadelphia

This event occurred, after a brief and not painful illness, on the twenty fourth of June, 1847, in the seventy-third year of her age. The preceding fac-simile of the announcement of the sad event to one of his oldest and dearest friends is expressive in its Spartan brevity.

The day after the burial, one of the papers said, "The funeral of the mother of Edwin Forrest, the great American tragedian, took place yesterday. She was buried in St. Paul's churchyard. The emotions of the actor on taking his last look at the parent who had always loved and cherished him so tenderly were far more keen than any he had ever feigned on the stage. We regard the mother of a man of fame and genius with an involuntary feeling of reverence. We think of her care and tutoring of her child in his earliest years."

The grief of Forrest when the form of his mother sank from his sight into the grave was indeed sharp and profound. His friend Forney said to him afterwards, "I did not suppose you were so sensitive. I saw how hard you had to struggle to control your feelings; and I think all the more of you for it."

The loss of his mother was a great misfortune to Forrest, not only in the sorrow and the sense of impoverishment it gave his heart, but also in removing the strong restraint she had exerted upon his growing distaste for society, his deepening resentment at the insincerity and injustice around him, and his consequent tendency to shut himself up in himself. If few men ever had a better mother, it may truly be said few men ever were more faithful in repaying their filial indebtedness. The love which Forrest cherished for his mother was a charming quality in his character, and the generous devotedness of his conduct to her was one of the finest features of his life. He used often to say that he owed to the early lessons she had taught him everything that was good in him. "Many and many a time," he said, "when I was tempted to do wrong, thoughts of my mother, of her love for me, of her faith and character, of what she would wish me to do and to be, came and drove the offending temptation away."

We can see something, much, indeed, of her character, by reflection, in the following letter written to her by Edwin from New Orleans in 1834, on receipt of the tidings of the death of his brother William:

MOTHER OF EDWIN FORREST

"My dear Mother,—We have experienced a deep and irreparable loss. You are deprived of a dutiful and affectionate son, my dear sisters of a most loving and devoted brother, and I have now none on earth to call by that tender and endearing name. The intelligence of William's death was a severe shock to me, so sudden, so unexpected. It seems but yesterday that I beheld him in the pride of his strength and manhood; and I can scarcely credit that his 'sensible warm motion has become a kneaded clod, doomed to lie in cold abstraction and to rot.' Yet is it a too sad reality, and we must try to bear our affliction as we ought. After the dreadful impression of the blow, my first thought was of *you*, my mother. I knew how truly and tenderly you loved him, and with great anxiety I have felt how deeply you must deplore the loss of him now. But for my sake, dear mother, for the sake of all your children, whose chief study in life is to make you happy, do not give way to grief, lest it impair your health and deprive you of the enjoyment of the many happy years through which it is our prayer that you may yet live to bless us. Whatever befalls any of your children, you must have the great consolation of knowing that in all your conduct towards them you have always been as faithful and kind and exemplary as any parent could possibly be.

"I have received letters from my friends Wetherill, Duffy, and Goodman. When you next see those kind gentlemen, thank them in my name for their grateful attention.

"I shall be with you in about three weeks, and I long for the time to come, that I may talk with you face to face about our dear William, and try, by my redoubled devotion, to make up to you for his departure. Give my love to Henrietta, Caroline, and Eleanora.

"My dear mother, that your years may be long and increase in comforts is the sincere prayer of your truly affectionate son,

"Edwin."

From Vienna, under date of December 10th, 1835, he wrote thus to her:

"My dear Mother,—You express a wish that it may not be long before I am restored to you. You cannot wish this more

sincerely than I do. For, to speak truth, I am weary with this wandering, and sigh for the sincere and tranquil joys of home. I hope, with the pleasure and instruction I have received from my journeyings, to entertain you during some long and friendly winter evenings, when we shall be cosily seated together in that snug little room of yours by a good coal-fire. How happy we shall be, dear mother! Then shall I see in those dark and expressive eyes of yours some occasional symptoms of doubt at my strange narrations, which, of course, I shall render both clear and probable by an abundance of testimony. Thus shall our evenings pass with calm reflection on my 'travel's history,' and you shall banish all regrets that I have stayed away from you so long. It will be a melancholy pleasure to contemplate the relics of our poor Lorman. Time, time, how fleeting and momentary is man's existence when compared with thy eternal march!"

In another letter to her during this same absence, he says, "Mother, do you sometimes wish to see your wandering boy and take him to your arms again? Why do I ask such a question? I know you do. Though all the world should forget me, I shall still be cherished in your heart; and your love is worth to me all the admiration of the world besides."

At a later time he wrote, "Beloved mother, it has been so long since I have heard from you, that I grow anxious to know that you are well and in the tranquil enjoyment of the blessings of this life. If ever any one deserved life's peaceful evening,—do not think I flatter,—that person is yourself. When I reflect upon the trials of poverty you have endured, how, under the most trying afflictions, you have sustained yourself with such becoming dignity, I cannot withhold the unfeigned homage which prompts me to say that I am as proud of you, who gave me birth, as you can ever have been of me in the choicest hours of my existence."

And in the latest year of her life he wrote, "Dearly beloved mother, is there not something I can send you which will give you pleasure? Anything in the world which it is in my power to obtain you have only to ask for in order to receive. You know I cannot experience a keener happiness than in gratifying any desire of yours, to whom I owe everything."

In the diary he kept during his first visit to Europe, this quo-

tation from Lavater was copied, with the appended verses: "'I require nothing of thee,' said a mother to her innocent son, when bidding him farewell, 'but that you bring me back your present countenance.'

"'What shall I bring thee, mother mine?
What shall I bring to thee?
Shall I bring thee jewels that shine
In the depths of the shadowy sea?'

"'Bring me that innocent brow, my boy!
Bring me that shadowless eye!
Bring me the tone of tender joy
That breathes in thy last good-bye!'"

His mother ever remained in his memory a hallowed image of authority and benignity, a presence associated with everything dear and holy. In an hour of effusion, near the end of his own life, he said, "When I saw her great dark eyes fixed on me, beaming with satisfied affection, and listened to words of approval from her lips, O it was more to me than all the public plaudits in the world! My God, what a joy it would be to me now to kneel at her feet and worship her! And they say there are such meetings hereafter. I know not, I know not. I hope it *is* so." He had her portrait over the foot of his bed, that her face, as in his childhood, might be the last sight he saw ere falling asleep, and the first to greet him when he awoke. And among the papers left at his death the following lines were found in his handwriting, either composed by him or copied by him from some unnamed source:

"MY MOTHER'S GRAVE.

"Here is my mother's grave. Dear hallowed spot,
The flight of these long years has changed thee not,
Though all things else have changed; e'en this sad heart,
In all, save thoughts of thee, which will not start,
But, woven in my being, burn again
With fires the torch of memory kindles still.
Though I have wandered far in distant spheres,
And mixed in many scenes of joy and tears,
And found in all, perchance, some friends, and loved
One who was even more, I ne'er have roved
From thee, my mother, and thy sacred grave.
I could forget, albeit a task severe,
All forms, all faces, all that love e'er gave,
Save thine, my mother,—that no time can wear.

I have but one sad wish when life is o'er,—
Whatever fate is mine, on sea or shore,
Whoe'er may claim my ashes for a trust,
They still may come to mingle with thy dust.
'Tis fit this troubled heart, when spent with care,
Again should turn to that unfailing breast,
And find at last the home my childhood shared,—
The quiet chamber of my mother's rest."

The wish has been fulfilled, and the forms of mother and son sleep side by side where no pain, no harsh word, ever comes.

In the September of 1848 Macready had made his reappearance on the American stage. Some of the friends of Forrest, democrats who had potent influence with the Bowery Boys, or the muscular multitude of New York, called on him, and proposed to have the English tragedian driven from the theatre. Forrest felt that such a course would be unworthy of him, and, instead of giving him revenge, would dishonor his name, and make his enemy of increased importance. He refused to have anything to do with such an attempt, and urged his friends to drop the matter entirely. They did so. When, however, Macready, taking advantage of a call before the curtain to make a speech, told the public that he had been assured that he was to be met by an organized opposition, and thanked them for the flattering reception which had "defeated the plan," "baffled his unprovoked antagonists, and rebuked his would-be-assailants," fresh indignation was stirred, and a great deal of bad blood kindled. In Philadelphia he was saluted with some hissing amidst the great applause. He then took occasion to say of Forrest, directly, "He did towards me what I am sure no English actor would have done towards him,—he openly hissed me." This caused an intense excitement in the house, with several personal collisions. The next day Forrest published a letter in the "Pennsylvanian," replying to Macready's speech, and arraigning his conduct and his character in very severe terms. The statements in the letter may all have been true and just, but it was written in an angry temper, and had better not have been written. It was not in good taste, and, spreading the contagion of an inflamed individual quarrel among the community, was of bad influence. Where his passions were concerned, good taste was not the motto of Forrest. Downright honesty and justice, rather

than the delicate standards of politeness, were his aim. Macready retorted in a published card, to which Forrest responded indirectly in several long letters to a friend. Thus the controversy waxed hotter, and excited wider and angrier interest. And when the English actor was ready to begin his closing engagement in New York, in May, 1849, the elements for a storm were all ready.

We can see the straight hitting from the shoulder of Forrest in every sentence of his "Card." "I most solemnly aver and do believe that Mr. Macready, instigated by his narrow, envious mind and his selfish fears, did secretly suborn several writers for the English press to write me down." We can see the wounded colossal arrogance of Macready in the allusion to his antagonist entered in his diary at the time. "The Baltimore papers characterize the performances of Forrest as equal, if not superior, to mine, and speak of him as of an artist and a gentleman. And I am to dwell in this country!" In the quarrel Macready appears as a vain and fretful aristocrat, observant of the fashionable code of courtesy, but capable of falsehood; Forrest as a proud and revengeful democrat, scornful of the exactions of squeamish society, and quite capable of bad taste. In both is visible the resentful and morbid egotism of their profession in a blameworthy and repulsive form. And the whole affair, on both sides, was undignified and ignoble in its character; and in its public result—though, of course, neither of them was directly responsible for this—it proved a murderous crime. It reflects deep and lasting discredit both on the Englishman and on the American. It may be of some use if it serves to illustrate the contemptible and wicked nature of the vice of professional jealousy, and to teach succeeding players whenever in their rivalry they meet malignant envy or opposition, magnanimously to overlook and forget it.

On the evening of May 7th, Macready was to appear in Macbeth at the Astor Place Opera House. The entire auditorium was crowded with an assembly of the most formidable character, resolved that the actor should not be suffered to play his part. There were comparatively few of the friends of Macready present, most of the seats being secured by the hard-handed multitude, who had made the strife an affair of classes and were bent on putting down the favorite of what they called the kid-gloved and silk-stockinged gentry. It is disagreeable thus to recall these

odious distinctions, but the truth of history necessitates it. Suffice it to say that the tragedian was overwhelmed with hisses, yells, derisive cries, followed by all kinds of missiles. Chairs were hurled from the gallery, smashing on the stage. When it was found that life was in danger, the curtain was lowered and the performance abandoned. Macready proposed to break his engagement and return to England. But the press condemned in the most scorching terms the outrage which had been done him, and insisted that he should appear again, and should be upheld at any cost. A letter was also sent him, signed by forty-eight gentlemen, including many of the most eminent and influential names in the city, urging him to continue his performances, and promising him the support of the community. He consented to repeat the trial.

In the mean time, the "Courier and Inquirer" had openly accused Forrest of being the author of the violent scenes on the evening of the seventh, but, convinced of its error, and threatened with a suit for libel, had immediately retracted, and amply apologized for the slander. Forrest had no share of any kind in any of these proceedings. The worst that can be said of him is that he refused to interfere to prevent the threatened violence. He sternly refused to interfere in the slightest degree with the strife which had now detached itself from him and fastened itself on the community and was raging between its top and bottom. The defiant and scornful tone of the press towards those whom it called rabble rowdies, lower classes, greatly incensed them, and called forth the counter-epithets,—lordlings, English clique, codfish-aristocracy. It was perfectly plain that a fearful tempest was brewing. Both parties made preparations accordingly. The enemies of the Englishman placarded the city with inflammatory handbills; and, on the other hand, the civic authorities detailed three hundred policemen to the scene of trial, and ordered two regiments of soldiers to be under arms at their quarters.

On the evening of the 10th of May, Forrest was acting the Gladiator in the Broadway Theatre when Macready attempted to act Macbeth in the Astor Place Opera House. The latter house had been so well packed by its friends with stalwart men that the Bowery Boys who were able to get seats found themselves in a

most decided minority. Still, they were numerous enough to make a chaos of diabolical noises when the curtain rose, whereupon the most of them found themselves incontinently hustled out into the street. But their party was too strong and filled now with too terrible a temper to be thus easily circumvented. The mob instantly assailed the theatre in front and rear. The thundering plunges with which they rushed against the doors shook the building, and volleys of stones shattered the barricaded windows, while the shouts and yells of the crowd might be heard a half a mile away. Meanwhile, the Seventh Regiment and the National Guards were marching to the spot. They were received with scoffs and hoots, clubs and paving-stones. The officers, both civil and military, used every exertion to quiet the rioters and avoid the final alternative of shooting upon them. All was vain. The more they harangued, expostulated, entreated, warned, threatened, the madder the mob seemed to grow. Already a large number of the soldiers were disabled by severe wounds, and it appeared as if soon their thronging assailants might wrench their weapons from them. At last the reluctant order was given by General Hall, "Fire!" A single musket replied. The mob laughed in derision, and pressed forward. General Sandford repeated, "Fire!" Only three shots followed the word. Colonel Duryea shouted, "Guards, fire!" The whole volley instantly flashed forth with that sharper and heavier report which distinguishes the service-charge from the mere powder and paper of field-day. The glare lit up a sea of angry faces. For an instant were clearly seen the human forms clustered on the steps and roofs of the adjacent buildings, the broken lamps and windows in front, the billowing multitude spread through the square and streets,—and then all was dark. The mob broke and fled, leaving thirty dead bodies on the ground, and as many severely wounded. The law by its armed force vindicated its authority at the cost of this frightful tragedy, and taught the passionate and thoughtless populace a lesson which it is to be hoped no similar circumstances will ever call for again.